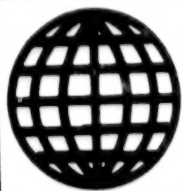


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20 November 1992



**FOREIGN
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JPRS Report

Near East & South Asia

Near East & South Asia

JPRS-NEA-92-156

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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Jibril on Lockerbie, IMYO Case, Israeli Pilot

93AE0036A London AL-WASAT in Arabic
10 Oc 92 pp 16-18

[Telephone interview with PFLP-GC general secretary Ahmad Jibril in Damascus, by Zaki Shihab in London; date not given: "We Did Not Plot To Overthrow Regime in Jordan, We Receive Aid From Iran, al-Asad Refused To Take Measures Against Us, I Am Ready To Appear Before Swiss Court in Lockerbie Case"—first paragraph is AL-WASAT introduction]

[Text] Ahmad Jibril, general secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), stated in an exclusive AL-WASAT interview that he did not plot to overthrow the regime in Jordan. He acknowledged that he receives aid from Iran, but denied that the value of the aid is \$500,000 a month. Jibril announced in the interview, which was conducted by telephone between London and Damascus, that he is ready to appear in court in Switzerland or any neutral country to testify on the blowing up of the American passenger airplane over Lockerbie in 1988. The following is the text of the interview with Jibril.

[Shihab] What is the nature of the relation between the PFLP-GC and the Jordanian deputies Layth Shubaylat and Ya'qub Qirsh, whose names have been cited in connection with an attempt to overthrow the regime in Jordan?

[Jibril] The Jordanian Government had its reasons for raising the subject. There was a domestic reason connected with settling scores between Shubaylat and leading figures of the regime, and with the Jordanian parliament, which recently passed resolutions to try certain leading figures of the regime for corruption. The regime decided that parliament's continued proposal of a trial was a red line and had to stop. I would draw your attention to the fact that Shubaylat was chairman of the parliamentary committee and played an important role in raising the question of corruption. This was the domestic reason. There was also a political reason related to the peace process. Yes, a meeting did take place between deputies Shubaylat and Qirsh and myself more than two years ago in Tehran on the occasion of a conference to support the intifadah and the Palestinian cause. The only purpose of our meetings and discussions was how to support the intifadah. It is no secret that I disagreed openly with the two men over their positive assessment of the PLO's leadership, action, and course. Shubaylat and Qirsh were enthusiastic about Yasir 'Arafat's policy at the time. We also disagreed about the invasion of Kuwait, its dimensions, and its dangers to the Palestinian cause in particular and to Arabs and Muslims in general. The Jordanian deputies were also enthusiastic about President Saddam Husayn. I do not think that such great differences between us would enable us to agree on secret fundamental matters such as preparing a conspiracy to overthrow the Jordanian regime, as was broadcast in Amman.

[Shihab] What about the meeting that is said to have taken place between you, Shubaylat, Qirsh, and Iranian officials in Tehran to plan for the coup?

[Jibril] Nothing of the sort took place. What I have mentioned sums up the nature of my relations with Layth Shubaylat and Ya'qub Qirsh.

[Shihab] What about your funding of the Islamic Mobilization Youth Organization (IMYO) in Jordan?

[Jibril] Yes, we have a relationship with these militants whose concern was and remains the struggle with the Zionist enemy in the occupied territories. In the past year they have carried out operations in the occupied territories that we knew about in advance. We in the PFLP-GC were and remain ready to give aid to any individual, group, or organization that wants to fight the Zionist enemy. We have given support to IMYO inside the occupied territories. As for the charge that IMYO's aim is to work in Jordan, I definitely think it offends reality. Our agreements through joint discussion have been clear: namely, that they and we are against an alternative Palestinian homeland in Jordan. This as regards our relations with IMYO; as for brothers Qirsh and Shubaylat, they are not leaders of IMYO, which is a Palestinian Muslim organization active in the occupied territories. If the Jordanian authorities have found weapons in the hands of its members, these weapons were in caches about to be sent into the occupied territories. Certainly, we did not supply them with these weapons.

[Shihab] How do you describe your group's relations with Jordan? Are you really backing or working for the overthrow of the regime there?

[Jibril] We do not say that there are friendly, good relations between us and Jordan, but there are normal, cautious relations. This applies to us as a front, and even at the family level. My sister, Umm-Firas, went with her mother-in-law for treatment in Jordan. She was held for 24 hours at Amman airport before being expelled from the country. I do not say that relations are very bad. They know very well that we are against interfering in Jordan's internal affairs. We have never been proved to have interfered or to have carried out any actions infringing upon Jordan's security and its domestic scene. Our goal is west of the river and nowhere else.

[Shihab] Why do your relations with Jordan remain cautious at a time when such historic Palestinian leaders as George Habash, Hawatimah, and others are working again with Jordan, even though they have positions on the settlement process that to a great extent do not agree with what is currently happening?

[Jibril] I think that the amount of pressure on Jordan from international parties, and America in particular, is what is preventing us from visiting Jordan. That is the main reason.

Relations With Tehran

[Shihab] What is the nature of your relations with Tehran, and when did they begin?

[Jibril] Relations between us and the Islamic republic in Iran go back to the date on which the republic announced its commitment to and support of the Palestinian cause. This is what I have sensed during my repeated visits to Iran.

[Shihab] Some say that your relations with Tehran developed after your relations with Libya cooled.

[Jibril] There is no connection between the two things. The nearer a regime draws to Palestine, the nearer we draw to that regime. The farther it becomes from Palestine, the farther we become from it. We have not heard that Colonel al-Qadhafi has distanced himself from Palestine. We appreciate his difficult political circumstances, and we stand with him in this period.

[Shihab] Why the estrangement between you and Libya now?

[Jibril] We appreciate the difficult situation through which Libya is passing and the blockade to which it is being subjected. We know that great demands are being made. The first demand upon the Libyan leaders is that they work to encourage Palestinian moderation. The price of this was the reception of 'Arafat. We forgive the Libyan leaders. We appreciate their circumstances.

[Shihab] Have you heard any justifications from Col. al-Qadhafi or Libyan officials for this change in Libyan policy?

[Jibril] They told us that they have been passing through difficult circumstances, especially since the United States bombed the Libyan capital in 1986 and the French Government tried to support the Chadian regime in a move to overthrow the Libyan regime. It is no secret that we sent 2,000 fighters to Libya to defend the revolution—not as mercenaries, but because we knew the size of the conspiracy to which a fraternal country was exposed. We are in touch with Libyan officials, if only through emissaries. I wish some Arab leaders would pay visits to Libya to bolster its steadfastness.

[Shihab] Do you think such visits are possible after we have heard so many derogatory things from Libyan newspapers about Arab visitors? They have been described as mercenaries and people who benefit at the expense of the Libyan people.

[Jibril] The Libyans wrote these things in the grip of disappointment at the Arab position. I myself felt annoyance, because we were not mercenaries. The relationship, indeed, was militant. Some Libyan newspapers wrote the opposite and attacked the newspapers you mentioned that attacked the Arabs. The overall situation in the region is tragic and bad.

[Shihab] Western circles have accused the PFLP-GC of carrying out the blowing up of the Pan American airliner over Scotland in 1988. What is your relation to this case? What is your response to the charges leveled against you? Is it true that you carried out the operation to serve Libyan or Iranian interests?

[Jibril] I think the charge of blowing up the Lockerbie airliner is a roving charge. The Americans want to attach it to any party with whom they want to get even. The United States has no evidence against us. When they raised the issue with Syrian officials, particularly with President Hafiz al-Asad, they kept asking him to take a position toward us as a group and toward me personally as the highest official of the group. President Hafiz al-Asad's response to them was, "Give me proof of the PFLP-GC's

involvement in the case and we will take steps against them, but for us to take any step without concrete proof is unacceptable." When President Hafiz al-Asad met with President George Bush a few months ago in Geneva, the Syrian president told President Bush, "Your demand about expelling PFLP-GC leader Ahmad Jibril is an Israeli demand, not an American demand." The Americans then accused Libya of the operation and of having made use of PFLP-GC technical expertise. Our front has no connection with the Lockerbie case. I am ready to appear before any court or tribunal in any neutral country, especially Switzerland.

[Shihab] Are you prepared to go to Switzerland for your trial?

[Jibril] Yes, I am ready to go to Switzerland if they want to obtain my testimony.

[Shihab] In other words, is the United States still demanding your expulsion from Syria?

[Jibril] There are still pressures, both economic and political, to halt aid to us.

[Shihab] Since you have mentioned the economic blockade, what amount of financial aid does your front receive from Tehran, and in return for what?

[Jibril] The aid we receive stems from Iran's commitment to care for half of the martyrs of the intifadah—600 martyrs. The Iranian Government pays monthly allocations for them. The money is sent through us into [the occupied territories]. Any person can ask the families of the martyrs in [the territories] about how someone knocks on the doors in Gaza and the West Bank and gives stipends to relatives of martyrs. I do not think Iran is in such a good economic position that it can open its treasury wide to us or anyone else. I am amazed by what Yasir 'Arafat said to a British delegation that met him a while ago, that Iran pays the PFLP-GC the sum of \$500,000 a month. I wish it were so!

[Shihab] How much do you actually receive from Iran?

[Jibril] We receive logistic aid in the area of food in addition to support for many of our social activities in the camps of Lebanon.

[Shihab] Enemies of the Iranian regime say that part of the aid you receive is to help the Tehran government pursue its opponents.

[Jibril] The brothers in the opposition know that is not true. Before the fall of the shah, our group was in the forefront of training the Mojahedin-e Khalq and other opposition groups, and we provided them with weapons. But we do not even know where the individuals with whom we cooperated in the past are. We are not mercenaries who work as evil hirelings.

[Shihab] Some people doubt the sincerity of Iran's feelings toward the Palestinian cause, particularly when they recall the nature of the relations between Israel, Iran, and the United States that were uncovered in what has been called "Irangate." There are also reports about an Israeli vehicle deal for Iran that was stopped in Portugal a few weeks ago. Have you tried to ask Iranian officials for an explanation of these matters?

[Jibril] From my acquaintance with the Iranian leaders, the Palestine issue is one of conviction. What is being published is fabrication by foreign intelligence agencies.

[Shihab] Why has no Iranian denial of the matter been issued, particularly when there are foreign reports that speak of documents and visits in the matter?

[Jibril] They have assured us that they will remain against the Israeli occupation. Israel's recent talk about Iran's possessing nuclear weapons is part of the campaign against Iran.

[Shihab] You, along with 10 other Palestinian organizations including Hamas, signed a statement opposing the peace process and the current negotiations. On what are you placing your bets, and what is the available alternative?

[Jibril] What is being plotted in Washington clearly aims at doing away with the Palestinian cause. They are negotiating over a small piece of land. Is Palestine limited to 2,000 square kilometers out of an original 28,000 square kilometers? They are ignoring the rights and hopes of 4 million Palestinians in the diaspora. The PLO has abandoned its charter, and that deprives it of its legitimacy.

[Shihab] Yet it is the PLO, led by Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, and not your viewpoint, that enjoys international recognition.

[Jibril] I have letters by a number of members of the Fatah Central Committee informing me that they are against the proposed settlement.

[Shihab] Who are they?

[Jibril] Abu-Mahir Ghunaym, 'Abbas Zaki, Nasr Yusuf, Muhammad Jihad, Intisar al-Wazir (Umm-Jihad), and others. They ask us to raise our voice louder.

[Shihab] Are these Fatah leaders you have mentioned ready to take a position supporting your proposals?

[Jibril] We have begun a program with the other groups. These brothers in Fatah will find that our move gives them breathing space.

[Shihab] What alternative do you have to the proposed peaceful settlement?

[Jibril] I have no magical alternative. I would prefer a thousand times over that the West Bank and Gaza continue to be occupied by the enemy for some time and that we not be forced to surrender under conditions of a power balance entirely to the enemy's advantage.

[Shihab] Let us return to the subject of Lockerbie. Is it true that the PFLP-GC cell arrested in Germany was connected with the blowing up of the American aircraft over Scotland? Western experts say that the device used in the explosion was similar to devices found in the possession of your cell in Germany.

[Jibril] The German court has had its say on the case. The German interior minister has said that the PFLP-GC cell had no connection near or remote with the Lockerbie case.

Engineering knowledge is not limited to one person in particular. If a person in Japan invents something, that does not prevent another person in the United States from inventing something similar.

[Shihab] You speak from time to time about military action against Israeli forces, yet we have not heard about your group's carrying out any military operation for a long time.

[Jibril] We now are focusing our attention on the intifadah in the occupied territories, and our people are responding favorably. What I am saying does not mean that we are standing with our hands tied. Our brothers in the national and Islamic resistance in Lebanon know that we carry out many operations against the occupation forces. We propose that they take responsibility for their execution because we do not wish to complicate the situation in South Lebanon. My allusion to this problem does not downplay the importance of the spirit of self-sacrifice in the Lebanese resistance; however, we act and they know about it. If we carry out military operations, some of our allies or friends may say, "Why don't you hold off a bit, so as not to cause us embarrassment for various reasons and because of the international climate."

Fate of Israeli Airman

[Shihab] By virtue of your relations with certain Islamic forces in Lebanon, specifically Hizballah, you mentioned in a statement that the Israeli airman Ron Arad is in the hands of Hizballah and is in good health. Why did you announce this? What is the fate of this airman?

[Jibril] We hoped that when the foreign hostages were released a deal would be reached whereby Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners in the hands of the Israeli enemy would be released. However, for reasons beyond our control—and perhaps the control of Hizballah and others—political circumstances developed that led to the splitting up of the deal. This annoyed me very much. Great benefits might have been realized. We considered ourselves partners with Hizballah in the matter. But the price for releasing the foreign hostages turned out to be small and meager. Even some parties that believed releasing the hostages would help Lebanon regain its health and would release foreign aid have received a shock. Lebanon received not a single dollar, and the West's relations with Iran or even with Syria did not improve very much.

[Shihab] Did Hizballah try to benefit from your expertise in exchanging prisoners?

[Jibril] We agreed with Hizballah on a unified program, but pressures from some of our allies caused us to respond favorably although our prisoners in Germany were still in their jails.

[Jibril] When you alluded previously to the health of airman Arad, did that mean that you had met him?

[Jibril] Yes, he was in good health when I met him.

[Shihab] And now?

[Jibril] I don't know.

GCC Trade With EC \$36.5 Billion in 1991*92P40026A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
25 Oct 92 p 9*

[Report by Nur-al-Din al-Furaydi]

[Text] Brussels—The value of trade between the EC and the nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] reached 28.938 billion ECU's [European Currency Units] (about \$36.5 billion) last year, with a deficit of about 1.9 billion ECU's (\$2.51 billion) on the GCC side.

An official source in the EC delegation to the [EC-GCC industrial] conference in Doha told AL-HAYAH: "The conference represents an important opportunity for interaction between businessmen from both sides, particularly many from small and medium-sized EC establishments, which will participate in meetings with GCC industrial circles for the first time." He indicated that many of these EC establishments are not aware of the importance of the GCC market and its great purchasing power, which is inconsistent with the demographic size of its consumer market. He said that the GCC market has an increasing purchasing capacity and can also be a center for exports to other, neighboring markets.

He singled out the subject of cooperation in the field of energy, which is the lifeblood of economic cooperation between the EC and the GCC, as an example "to open the path of cooperation between industrial institutions from numerous sectors in the hope that it will lead to establishing joint institutions between the two sides" and allow EC sales in the GCC area to increase on the one hand and to transfer technology and diversify the GCC's industrial fabric on the other. EC official sources told AL-HAYAH that the GCC parties "still differ among themselves with regard to the parameters of free trade and customs unification issues." A diplomat who will participate in the Doha conference believes that EC advice to a great extent meets GCC needs, despite the fact that GCC diplomatic sources in Brussels, for their part, say that "the advice is still unsound and denied what is being repeated about differences in the ranks of GCC negotiators." [quotation marks as published] They do not consider such differences, if they exist, to be a weak point in the GCC position because the interests of GCC industries as a whole require highly complex evaluations.

Trade Group Provides \$154 Million to Arab States*93AE0040C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
13 Oct 92 p 10*

[Report from Cairo: "Arab Trade Program To Finance \$154 Million in Intra-Arab Commerce"]

[Text] Dr. Faris bin-Jaradi, technical vice president of the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Trade Financing Program, said that the program has agreed to finance about \$154 million in intra-Arab trade transactions by a number of countries including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Algeria, Kuwait, Morocco, Tunisia, and the Sudan.

Bin-Jaradi, currently visiting Cairo, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the funds cover 77 applications submitted by the Arab countries to finance product exports, including trucks, phosphates, textiles, construction iron, cement,

foods, medical supplies, and cotton. He added that more applications, valued at about \$260 million, are also being considered.

The Arab Trade Financing Program was created as a joint Arab organization capitalized at \$500 million, of which 90 percent is already paid. Its major partners include the Arab Monetary Fund (\$250 million), the Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development (\$100 million), and Egypt (\$10 million). Other contributors include commercial banks and financial institutions in 34 [as published] Arab states.

He said that the primary function of the newly created program, which commenced actual operations last January, is to finance intra-Arab trade and open new markets for it in order to develop exports and promote potential opportunities for exports and their importers. It offers its services through 27 national agencies in 16 Arab countries. The agencies act as a liaison between the program and importers and exporters in those countries, making funds available at concessionary, rather than commercial, rates. Those are calculated at LIBOR (London Interbank Overnight Rate) plus a margin of up to 0.5 percent.

On average, intra-Arab trade has accounted for about 10 percent of total Arab trade in the past 10 years.

He explained that impediments to intra-Arab trade fall into four categories—limited productive structures and narrow productive bases, customs and noncustoms barriers, economic conditions in the various Arab countries, and the scarcity, or lack, of services necessary for the growth of such trade. There is also the impact of the political factor on trade.

He pointed out that political relations have a substantial impact, positively or negatively, on the flow and growth of trade. This is reflected to a large degree in the speed and manner in which trade restrictions are handled and in multilateral cooperation to provide the services necessary for trade development.

He added that different economic policies and disparate resources and levels of developments among the Arab countries leave an impact because certain countries pursue free market economies when others have long-standing systems of controlled economies, where public sectors dominate economic activity resulting in production inefficiencies and weak incentives. It is also to be noted that several Arab countries have given priority to the protection of their local industries.

He emphasized that the Arab states and their specialized agencies are indeed working to nurture the growth of intra-Arab trade. Regional Arab economic organizations, for example, strive for the removal of trade barriers and for the adoption of uniform commercial codes in their member-states as a step towards the creation of common markets among them. There is no doubt that such organizations will have a positive impact on realizing economic integration among their members and in strengthening their hand in negotiating with other regional blocs.

He said that such Arab efforts have allowed the Arab Investment Guarantee Organization to expand operations to include commercial and non-commercial risk insurance

for Arab exports. Those efforts were more recently directed towards the general practical measure of creating the Arab Trade Financing Program.

On another matter, he emphasized that the emergence of world economic blocs has shown that Arab countries need to depend on Arab markets as the natural and primary outlet for their products and to facilitate dealing with those Arab markets. That is why the program created an Arab trade information network whose function is to make information available to all exporters and importers in Arab countries on such matters as products, laws, shipping, facilities, etc.

Bin-Jaradi emphasized that we must remove all customs barriers among the Arab countries if we are to develop intra-Arab trade and gain self-sufficiency. Those countries must also coordinate their economic policies and must make available all other required services such as marine facilities, shipping, etc. They must also provide opportunities for businessmen in the various Arab states to meet regularly in order to promote and propel joint projects.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Al-Barghuthi Interviewed on Intifadah, Infighting
93AE0028C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
12 Oct 92 p 5

[Statements of Bashir al-Barguthi reported from London by 'Ali al-Salih: "Adherence to Joint Principles Is Basic Guarantee of Intifadah's Survival, [Says] Secretary General of Palestinian People's Party"]

[Text] Bashir al-Barghuthi has said that "to the extent that the political forces on the Palestinian scene adhere to their shared principles, delineating resistance to the Israeli occupation, they are ensuring the continuity of the intifadah." He added that it was hoped that inner conflicts would not prevail and overcome the major contradiction between the Palestinian people and the occupation authorities.

Al-Barguthi was speaking to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT during his private visit to the British capital about the intifadah in the occupied territories, and the conflicts and new features of the domestic Palestinian scene.

Al-Barguthi is the secretary general of the Palestinian People's Party, represented in the PLO's Executive Committee by Sulayman al-Najjab; it is the power supporting the current peace talks. He also serves as the editor of the AL-TALI'AH [THE VANGUARD], a weekly paper published in occupied Jerusalem, and banned from circulating in the occupied territories since 1978.

Al-Barguthi adds, in his reply addressing the conflicts and divisions the intifadah is experiencing, "We view with great pain any conflicts that arise, because those responsible will achieve no benefit. Therefore we are constantly appealing for an end to these conflicts—for them to be contained as soon as possible."

On whether or not the peace talks were the basis of the conflicts and divisions, he said, "Whoever wants to liberate or negotiate must first end the occupation." He went on, "The intifadah was not doing well, even before the

negotiations started, so it is incorrect to link the existing problems in the intifadah to the start of the negotiations."

Al-Barghuthi defined the causes of the problems as the Israelis' continuing acts of repression, economic conditions, and the special nature of the intifadah, being a popular movement, and the general Arab situation, plus some of the private and governing practices of some of the parties, which have led to the diminishing of the democratic character of the intifadah.

The secretary General of the People's Party reaffirmed that there is no alternative to the peace negotiations, which he said were expected to conclude in two phases, the first transitional and the second permanent. He said that it is the responsibility of the Palestinian negotiators to link the two phases, leading the way to Israeli withdrawal and the establishment of an independent state.

He indicated that the negotiating process should not be viewed through certain interpretations; the basic issue should be considered, which was that the Israeli side wanted to put the negotiations on track to divide the occupied territories and implement the ruling Labor Party's program, to retain a significant portion of these territories.

The task of the Palestinian negotiators, as al-Barghuthi sees it, is to get the negotiations on the road to total withdrawal. He said it was natural for different terms and expressions to be used, but the starting point was still most important.

He went on to say that Israel rejected UN Resolutions 242 and 338 as the authority for the solution; the reason was that Resolution 242 considered the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and east Jerusalem to be occupied territories. With its refusal to deal with the resolution on this basis, Israel avoids the recognition of its occupation of the territories.

In this connection, he said, "The difference between the present government of Yitzhaq Rabin and the former government of Yitzhaq Shamir, is an outward difference. Rabin's government is better able than its predecessor to find the language to use with the liberal forces in the West, and has been able to achieve understanding with them and break Israel's isolation during Shamir's rule. But I assert that there is no difference between the two governments on the subject of the negotiations."

Responding to a question on the talk of forming a special four-member committee to monitor the peace talks, composed of Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu Mazin), Yezir 'Abd-Rabbu, Nabil Sha'th, and Sulayman al-Najjab, the secretary of the People's Party denied the existence of any such committee, reaffirming the existence of a supreme political committee headed by Yasir 'Arafat himself, and in which those men participated.

On the forces for peace in Israel, al-Barghuthi confirmed the existence of genuine Israeli forces for peace that demanded withdrawal from the occupied territories and the establishment of a Palestinian state. However, he said, the positions of these forces were divided between their private local interests, and their public goals. Rabin understands this fact very well. He fears the Meretz Party, for example, which is part of the Israeli Government. If it applies pressure on Rabin as it dictates its public goals to

it, its position might lead to the collapse of the government, to which there is no alternative but an extreme rightist government.

"Because he understands this fact," he added, "and the limitations of these forces' ability to apply pressure on him, Rabin acts freely to to serve his party's positions. Hence the weakness of these forces' true role in Israel."

PFLP's Habash Reportedly Retiring to Amman

93AE0028B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 12 Oct 92 p 4

["Habash Residing in Amman; Reason, Grave Conflicts Within Popular Front," reported from London's Centre for Political Studies]

[Text] AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], Dr. George Habash, now in Amman, will reside permanently in the Jordanian capital with his wife and children, and that he will return to Damascus, where his command is located, only for brief visits on set occasions.

Palestinian sources confirmed that Dr. Habash had made the decision to reside permanently in Amman after deciding to give up his position as head of the Popular Front in favor of his deputy, Abu 'Ali Mustafa, because of his advanced years and his inability to carry out his duties because of the state of his health.

Some quarters voiced the opinion that Dr. Habash had decided to retire and settle permanently in Amman because of the severity of the conflicts inside his Popular Front, conflicts that have gone on so far before the holding of the Front's General Conference despite the holding of all its [other] conferences.

This sources say that two factions emerged during the branch conferences the Front held: a faction supporting the current peace process and the policy of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and a faction opposing this process and demanding a harder line and the formation of a Palestinian rejection front.

Internal PLO Report Considers Confederation

93AE0028D London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 10 Oct 92 p 5

[Article from the Amman bureau: "Arafat's Problem With Palestinian-Arab Relations on the Eve of the Seventh Round of Bilateral Negotiations"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted]

Report

The following appeared in a limited-circulation report from the PLO Studies Department, published this past September 10:

"The prevalent belief is that the solution to the Palestinian issue will come in stages, and that in its final stage it would not be very far from the idea of Palestinian-Jordanian confederation after the withdrawal of Israel from all, perhaps part, of the lands occupied in 1967. The Palestinians do not oppose this inclination—according to the report—but they want the declaration of the establishment

of a sovereign Palestinian state, perhaps for 24 hours, as the PLO's Strategic Publication 8 of 1991 stipulates, before entering into talks over the confederal union."

The report indicates that the American-Israeli understanding of a confederal solution with Jordan is as close as possible to the federal formula, whose attributes would go no further than the existence of a single central government for two—or more!—political units. Not all of them need enjoy sovereignty, and thus the element of Palestinian sovereignty is eliminated from this union. [passage omitted]

Study Provides Figures on Territories' Farmers

93AE0039A Nicosia FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 11 Oct 92 p 15

[Article: "2,245,981 Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip"; figures as published]

[Text] A statistical report issued by the "Agricultural Database," which is a joint project between the Arab Intellectual Club and the Federation of the Agricultural relief committees, reveals that the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Jerusalem are 2,245,981 living in 481 population centers in nine major areas. Their distribution is as follows:

Jericha	36,720
Hebron	284,870
Jerusalem	206,489
Bethlehem	124,620
Jenin	189,900
Ramallah	198,530
Tulkram	196,297
Naples	250,590
Total	1,488,016
Gaza Strip	757,965
Grand Total	2,245,981

The report includes statistical information about the population centers, agricultural equipment, and animals used in the fields. It also provides information about the water and electricity networks and the water wells scattered in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Those returning from the Gulf and settled in the occupied territories total 27,101 living in the following areas: Jericha, 531; Hebron 1,201; Jerusalem 825; Bethlehem, 542; Jenin, 6,626; Ramallah, 2,487; Tulkram, 5,427; Naples, 6,091; Gaza, 3,380; total 27,101.

As for the electricity networks, the report mentioned that the percentage of the Palestinian population centers that depend directly upon the Israeli electricity company is 24.5 percent, while 37.4 percent depend on a Palestinian company, 33.2 percent depend on local generators, and 4.7 percent do not have electricity.

The percentage of the Palestinian population centers that depend on the Israeli Water company for drinking water is

37 percent, while 26.2 percent depend on a local Palestinian company. The remainder of 36.7 percent depend on wells and do not have water networks.

Water Wells

The total number of water wells is 724: of which 24.7 percent are used for drinking, 42 percent for irrigation purposes, and 36 percent are not used.

Local Authorities

Of the population centers 5.8 percent have municipal councils, 17 percent have village councils, while 72.5 percent have mayors and 4.2 percent have camp directors.

This report is the result of the work of about 20 qualified field workers in the different areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. They have had extensive training in obtaining and verifying information.

Janin Merchants Show Support for PLO

93AE0028A Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 24 Sep 92 p 12

[Article: "Hundreds of Janin Area Merchants Confirm Support for PLO"]

[Text] Hundreds of Janin area merchants yesterday signed a petition confirming that they stand behind the PLO and support its position and political decisionmaking.

The petition ran as follows:

"We, the merchants of the Janin area confirm our support for the PLO and its political decisionmaking. What makes us reaffirm this fundamental truth in our Palestinian political tradition [is] the threatening, menacing, and irresponsible method pursued by some, far from the national spirit solicitous of the public interest. This was on September 23, 1992 forcing us to close our places of business, thus depriving us of expressing our political view and of our right and our freedom to have our rightful say, which is yes to the Palestine Liberation Organization and its leader, our brother, Commander Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat]."

The petition met with wide support among merchants.

Mrs. 'Arafat Profiled, Discusses Home Life

93AE0038A London AL-WASAT in Arabic 28 Sep 92 pp 18-21

[Interview with Suha 'Arafat by Michel Bu-Najm; place and date not given: "Story of My Life With Abu-'Ammar"]

[Text] When you meet Suha al-Tawil, you inevitably fall under her influence. Young and beautiful, she knows how to smile and is unassuming and sympathetic. She laughs a lot. Desire for life, knowledge, and expression of her ideas emanate from her, but at the same time she is reserved. Without her telling you, you realize from her that there are subjects she does not like to approach. She speaks many languages and, an avid reader, she keeps up with the latest arrivals in the world's bookstores. She is at once unassuming and elegant. Talking with her is lovely and delightful. You ask yourself whether this can be the woman whom Yasir 'Arafat chose to be his wife.

I expected to confront a woman predominantly sad, one living in another world. The surprise is that Suha 'Arafat is a lively woman with great curiosity to learn and discuss. She

loves life, art, literature, and cinema. She loves to develop herself. She knows the world's major capitals. She knows Paris inside out: its neighborhoods, its sites, and its intellectual and artistic monuments. She has friends and acquaintances. Yet Suha 'Arafat is a woman committed to the cause of her people and sensitive to their condition. She shares their pains and tragedies. In particular, she is fully aware of her position, her new life, and the duties that go along with being the wife of Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, with all this implies: the necessity of vigilance, commitments, and acceptance of many necessary measures. You ask yourself what path led this young woman to become the wife of a president who surrounds himself with perhaps the world's greatest security measures because he is the most exposed to assassination. You ask yourself also what brought together two people separated by a barrier of age that some people view as difficult to overcome and by the barrier of belonging to two different generations and denominations. What caused this young woman, a daughter of the Palestinian bourgeoisie whose family roots go deep into the history of Palestine, to abandon an easy life and dedicate herself to the man who is Yasir 'Arafat? Why did 'Arafat depart from the well-known bachelorhood that he maintained for 61 years? How can a 29-year-old woman live and move next to 'Arafat, whom his acquaintances say is always threatened, citing as evidence the long list of his comrades and Palestinian leaders who have fallen victim to Israeli bullets or Palestinian settling of scores? I asked myself these and other questions during the conversation with Suha 'Arafat.

The magic key to answering these questions can be found in the home of Suha al-Tawil, in the occupied territories, and in the education she received from her parents. Her father, Da'ud al-Tawil, is a senior bank director. Her mother, Raymonda al-Tawil, is a well-known Palestinian militant. Suha al-Tawil was born in Jerusalem. She first opened her eyes to the sight of the Dome of al-Aqsa Mosque and the quarters, lanes, and streets where history has dwelt for thousands of years. She spent her childhood between Jerusalem, Nabulus, and Ramallah.

Life smiled on the child Suha, but scarcely had her feet learned the way to school (she was five years old) before the first shock in Suha's life happened: the setback after the disaster. The 1967 Arab-Israeli war made Suha open her eyes to the tragedies of the people, the displaced persons, and the new emigration of tens of thousands of Palestinians.

The Day Dayan Pursued 'Arafat

About that period Suha said: "From my earliest childhood, my eyes were open to seeing people. From the education we received at home, we learned the meaning of sacrifice and of struggle. My mother, Raymonda al-Tawil, taught us the meaning of revolution, commitment, national feeling, and dedication. Raymonda founded the Palestinian Information Bureau, the first news agency in the occupied territories. After the 1967 war, she took an interest in humanitarian work and helping people displaced from their homes." Suha told us about an episode whose full meaning she understands today: "The first day I heard about Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] was in 1968. I remember that we were at home in Nabulus. There was shooting. We learned that the Israelis were looking for a Palestinian named Abu-Muhammad who had carried out a military operation. Moshe Dayan had ordered a house-by-house search of Nabulus to find him. Abu-Muhammad was none other than Abu-'Ammar." Suha added: "Imagine, at age five I heard news about a person who now has become my husband!"

This was the first contact, albeit indirect, between Suha al-Tawil and Yasir 'Arafat. The young girl grew up. Her consciousness grew with her, nourished by the atmosphere of home and the meetings she was enabled to have with Palestinian and non-Palestinian personalities. When Suha finished her secondary studies at the school of the People's College [al-Kulliyah al-Ahliyah] in Ramallah, where she took first place in the baccalaureate course, she decided to go to France to finish her studies at the Sorbonne in Paris. Suha received a master's degree in foreign languages from that university and registered for a doctorate. This kind of life enriches and develops the personality, opening to it the doors of knowledge, culture, and self-development. About the Paris period of her life, Suha said that she opened her eyes "not only to the tragedy of the Palestinian people, but to the tragedies of the whole world from Namibia to Chile." About Yasir 'Arafat, she said: "I had the good fortune to meet him several times in the company of my mother in Tunis, Amman, and Baghdad. Later I used to go to Tunis frequently—that was in 1988. One day Abu-'Ammar asked me to stay with him and work beside him. At first I refused, because accepting his suggestion would have meant halting my education and being prohibited from returning to Palestine to see my family. My mother also refused. But in the end I accepted. I became convinced that the Palestinian interior and exterior were one thing and that sacrifice was necessary."

By accepting the offer, Suha al-Tawil thought she was offering her contribution to the cause and was serving her people by serving this man who never wearied of a nomadic life. When Suha agreed to leave her studies in Paris and end her "normal" life, she knew, as she said, "the size of the sacrifices that would be required and the isolation from the life to which she had become accustomed."

Who Is Abu-'Ammar?

We asked Suha al-Tawil, "Is a professional relationship with Abu-'Ammar easy?" The wife of Yasir 'Arafat answered: "Abu-'Ammar is a man who demands good, precise, perfect work. From this point of view, work with him is no picnic, especially because his manner of work, movement, travel, gatherings, and meetings is extraordinary." She added: "Abu-'Ammar is a Leo. He is a demanding person. When he seeks something, he does not look at the difficulties that prevent its realization. He wants to carry out his demand as fully as possible."

This characteristic makes working with Abu-'Ammar, as his acquaintances and intimates say, difficult, especially in moments of anger. When his mood is troubled by work, he does not hesitate to reprimand, rebuke, and blame. But Suha 'Arafat defends her husband. She does not deny his sternness, emotionalism, and passions, but she finds an excuse for all of this. He is in a position of leadership and responsibility, one that demands that its holder be informed, precise in his information, sure about it, and organized. Abu-'Ammar at the head of the PLO must be in constant contact with overseas, with his embassies in foreign countries, with inside Palestine, and with the places where decisions are made. In her view, Abu-'Ammar demands of others only a part of what he demands of himself. Suha 'Arafat elaborated: "Abu-'Ammar reads a

quantity of reports, information, summaries, communications, resolutions, newspapers, and books that no ordinary man could read. They keep him busy from morning until late at night. Then there are the gatherings and meetings, planned and unplanned, and the sudden moves and trips, all in the shadow of strict security measures." Suha again spoke of Abu-'Ammar's temperament: "Although it is true that he becomes emotional at times, he is good-hearted and knows how to forgive and forget. Of course he gets angry, but he also knows how to smile. He rebukes, but he thanks and praises. He does not forget his friends, and he does not forget the families and children of martyrs."

We Married 2 Years Ago

We asked this young woman, who gives the impression of understanding life and knowing what she wants, how a professional relationship with Abu-'Ammar in which she used to monitor certain portfolios, especially the economic and social ones, as well as translating, preparing reports, and escorting—how this relationship slipped into the idea and then the reality of marriage? We also asked her why the marriage was concealed.

Suha 'Arafat said: "What was said and published about the date of our marriage is not correct. We married two years ago. Those close to us, our family, and the immediate entourage knew the news. We did not want to spread the news. We were waiting for a joyous occasion to announce the news of our marriage." We understand her to mean that the wedding was very simple and that reports about opposition to the marriage are unfounded; indeed, letters of congratulation continue to reach her from the occupied territories. As for the revelation of the news of the marriage, Suha 'Arafat said that it did not come from their entourage or PLO circles, but from other sources.

Suha 'Arafat elaborated on how her relation with Yasir 'Arafat developed. Very bashfully she informed us that she believes in love—sudden, inexplicable love that does not enter into chemical or mathematical equations. She faltered as she said that when she agreed to be 'Arafat's wife, she was aware of all of the difficulties that awaited her, such as the very peculiar kind of life her husband lives, the differences between the two of them, the sacrifices that would be demanded from her, and the duties that would be imposed on her.

Suha 'Arafat said: "I am not a wife like other wives. I did not marry Yasir 'Arafat; I also married the symbol, the country, and the cause. I have no private life as a woman and wife. Our private life has blended with our public life. Yasir 'Arafat did not join me; I am the one who joined him and his mode of life. The woman who married Yasir 'Arafat knew that she would give up many things she liked and some of her freedom. I cannot move without a guard and security arrangements and measures. Do you want an example? I like Paris. I like to take walks there and visit the places I know, but that is forbidden for me. My husband is not like other husbands. I share him with many: with the cause, with his appointments with Palestinian leaders, and with the Palestinian people." Suha 'Arafat told us that she sees her husband for only a few hours, sometimes late at night. She rarely finds time or opportunity to eat alone with her husband because there are always guards, companions, and guests. She talks to you about her simple,

ordinary house in Tunis. She said that she sometimes wants to cook and prepare meals and play the role of wife and homemaker.

If one were to infer from Suha's words that marriage to Yasir 'Arafat does not mean rest and an easy life, that would be but half the truth. Suha told us the other half, how she sees a positive side in the marriage: she accepted, because "I can serve my country, my people, and my cause through this man." Suha admitted that she is afraid of the lights and does not like them. She hoped that her life would be quiet and simple. "Today I avoid the lights as much as I can, because getting too close to them burns."

I Try To Keep Up With Him

We asked Suha 'Arafat, "What is your fondest wish?" She answered: "My fondest wish is that God will give us children to increase the family. I hope that this wish becomes reality and hope to be able to raise my children so that they share the destiny of the Palestinian people." We asked Suha 'Arafat to talk to us about 'Arafat's unknown side. She talked about her husband who no longer wants her to travel with him on the same airplane. What surprised her in him was his simplicity of life in food, drink, and clothing. She added: "Abu-'Ammar does not erect barriers between himself and people, despite his being busy. He can always find time to listen to requests and complaints. He knows nothing of life's pleasures. His food is very ordinary. His clothing does not change in summer or winter." Suha added: "Abu-'Ammar is a man of faith. He draws resolution from this faith. His faith helped him overcome the great tragedies that have affected him and the Palestinian people. His faith saved him from the crash of his plane in the Libyan desert a few months ago. I saw him moved, and I saw him crying."

We asked Suha 'Arafat, "What have you changed in the life of Abu-'Ammar?" She said: "I knew beforehand that it would be impossible for me to change anything in the life to which Abu-'Ammar became accustomed years ago. He is the one who has made changes in my life, and I am the one who has followed behind him. I am the one who tries to keep up with his style of life without complaining. Abu-'Ammar is no ordinary head of a family. On the other hand, I have added something to his life—perhaps a smile, perhaps joy, perhaps a feminine presence. There is a kind of deprivation in life with him, but I believe that a person must not be far from his people." We learned from Suha 'Arafat that she does not interfere in political matters and in the decisions that Abu-'Ammar makes. He does not ask her opinion, although she does not hesitate to speak it. However, he does consult her about meetings, about presents that must be given to friends, about taking care of some people, and about those who ask his aid. Seen this way, she does engage in politics, but in its social and human side, not in politics as direct action, "because Abu-'Ammar would not accept that." We also learned that her concern is to be "a link between Abu-'Ammar and living reality. I give him a real picture of actual life and what is happening, for people frequently falsify." As for herself, she said she has not changed. She tries to make people deal with her as they used to in the past: "I do not like fuss and flattery."

As much as Suha 'Arafat agrees to discuss social and humanitarian matters, she shies away from political matters. These she thinks are better discussed directly with Abu-'Ammar and Palestinian officials. Suha does not wish to go into the crisis that arose over the need to appoint a deputy to 'Arafat to hold responsibility with him as a precaution against an emergency. She does not want to go into the result of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, though she eagerly says, "The important thing is that Palestinians should live free on their land."

I asked Suha 'Arafat, "What do you like?"

[Suha 'Arafat] I like to feel that I am useful. I like to serve. I like humility.

[Bu-Najm] What do you dislike?

[Suha 'Arafat] I dislike flattery and sham. I do not like barriers between people. I cannot stand haughtiness.

[Bu-Najm] Is the dream of returning strong in the two of you?

[Suha 'Arafat] Our fondest hope is to return together to Jerusalem. When we married, Abu-'Ammar told me, "We shall return together."

[Bu-Najm] What was your most intense moment of anxiety?

[Suha 'Arafat] The moment of anxiety when his plane disappeared over the Libyan desert. I did not believe what had happened. I had to control my nerves and not cry. I had to show self-control before others. We had to move quickly, because the destiny of an entire people was bound up with the destiny of a person. After his rescue, Abu-'Ammar said to me, "Is it conceivable that my life should end in an airplane accident somewhere in the desert?"

[Bu-Najm] What was the moment of greatest joy?

[Suha 'Arafat] When I received the news that they had found the plane and that Abu-'Ammar had come out of the accident safely. I had an anxious moment when I heard on the radio that Abu-'Ammar had been taken to a hospital in Jordan for surgery. Abu-'Ammar called before entering, but hid the news from me. King Husayn showed great concern about Abu-'Ammar. I thank him for it. I also thank the Jordanian medical team at King Husayn Medical City for their dedication.

EGYPT

Egyptians 'Driven' To Seek Work in Iraq

93AF0022A Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 1 Sep 92 p 3

[Article by Mamduh Hasan]

[Text] The Iraqi people are suffering severely from the economic and air blockade imposed on Iraq by the United Nations. Thousands of industrial establishments have been shut down, and others have collapsed in the aftermath of the Gulf war. There are medicine and food shortages. Many children are dying, and diseases are spreading. Unemployment is soaring among Iraqis. The crisis between Iraq and the United Nations has flared again, and there is fear that war will be renewed in the Gulf region. In spite of all these difficulties, Egyptians are still

blinded and have not been alerted or enlightened about these difficulties. They are also not convinced not to throw themselves in hell and destruction, with the result that tens and even hundreds of Egyptians still ask the officials at Cairo's Office for Iraqi Interests to give them visas to enter Iraq, or "hell on Earth." Why do so many young men insist on going to Iraq, regardless of these difficult circumstances? What are their reasons for doing so? How do they foresee the future in Iraq? Do they know what is going on inside this country? Have they failed to get a job in Egypt? Have they followed Gulf war events and the new Iraqi crisis with the United Nations? Are these people infected with "traveling-abroad AIDS"?

400 Visas Issued To Enter 'Hell on Earth'

There is a new "traveling-abroad AIDS" that is infecting hundreds of Egyptians, diffusing through their veins. These people no longer have any immunity against this disease. There are two ways to look at this disease. The first is to look at it positively, seeing the benefits to both patient and state. The patient travels with a work permit and feels secure. The state also benefits from the individual's working abroad. The second is to look at its negative impacts, as represented by the patient who is addicted to traveling and ventures with his life, his future, and his family, and seems to have sentenced himself to death, even though he has not committed any crime. Those infected with the disease travel willingly to "hell on Earth," or Iraq, in their indulgence and do not even consider their responsibility towards themselves. Moreover, they do not think for even a moment about what is going on in the political arena. They have not learned from the difficult circumstances that retreating Egyptian workers faced in Iraq, when the Gulf war erupted. Those retreating workers lost their money and returned home empty-handed. Those wanting to travel to Iraq also forgot the pain that they were subjected to in order to cash their money transfers from al-Rafidayn Bank and the days on end that they had to wait for until their money orders arrived. They also forgot how they slept many nights on the sidewalks of al-Tahrir Street in Duqqi in order to change some dollars. They do not remember for a moment the sequence of war events, the Iraqi people's suffering, the medicine and food shortages, and the death of many children because of the shortages of inoculations and the direct bombing that they witnessed.

Those workers wishing to travel to Iraq do not remember the corpses and coffins that were returned from Iraq. They did not hear about the ultimatum to Iraq banning their planes from flying over the region where Iraqi Shi'ites live or about Iraq placing its forces on the alert and preparing for the possibility of another war. In reality, these persons live in a complete coma. They would not realize their mistakes until they return home. At such a time, they would ask the Egyptian Government to protect them, restore to them what is due to them, and share their miseries with them. What can the government do with those infected with "travel AIDS"? The government should not be accountable for the mistakes of Egyptians who travel but are not responsible for themselves. The Egyptian authority can only warn those workers not to travel to that country, which is passing through harder times than any Arab country has ever gone through. Besides, the Iraqi population is suffering from many

problems, such as food and medicine shortages, closed factories, and the spread of endemic diseases. Iraq is confronting various problems that hinder its development. Its funds that were in foreign banks during the war period were frozen. In addition, dealings between Iraq and international commercial markets have been suspended. So, how do those workers view their future in hell on Earth?

Many Egyptians are crowding and waiting in front of the Office of Iraqi Interests in Cairo in order to obtain visas to enter Iraqi territory. Everyone hopes to be able to enter Iraq first, as though one could grab plenty of money upon one's arrival. Everyone has kept his ears shut so that he would not hear the drums of renewed war that are beating these days. Those wanting to travel to Iraq are afraid of waking up from their dreams and finding reality.

Hasan Zaki Faris, 35, from Tanta, was lined up, ready to hand in his application requesting permission to travel to Iraq. I asked him about the reasons for his travel and why he wants to return to Iraq? He said: "I returned from Iraq five months ago, which means after the Gulf war, and I have great hopes of going back, in spite of the war conditions. I am accustomed to working there, and I know how to live during wartime and amid the conditions that the Iraqi people have to endure. The reason for my insisting on going back and suffering the pain of traveling is that I have kept some money with some of my friends in Iraq, and I want to take it and start a small business there in order to earn a living. This will enable me to send my children their monthly expenses. I went to Iraq for the first time in 1975. I have a lot of experience in traveling, and I lived there during the war between Iraq and Iran and throughout the air bombardment during the Gulf war. I am not weary of missiles or planes. I am used to that, and my family knows this quite well. I have managed to settle my life. I bought an apartment, married, and have two children. I managed to accomplish all that with money that I saved during my work abroad. I have but one ambition, which is to work in Iraq and to send my family their monthly expenses."

I left Hasan with his dreams and spoke to another young man who was waiting to hear his name called. He was a cobbler in Iraq. Rida Ramsis, 26, was smiling and said: "I came to Cairo only 25 days ago to spend my vacation. I want to get a visa to enter Iraqi territory. I would like to marry an Iraqi girl."

Muhammad al-Shishini, 28, is working in a car-repair shop and trying to get a visa for Iraq. He said: "I returned from Iraq at the beginning of the Gulf war, and since my return, I have not been able to get a job in Cairo that would cover my expenses. I cannot make a living here, and so I have to travel to Iraq so that I can build a future for myself." I asked him about his fears from the war? He said: "The God of Egypt is the God of the Iraqi people. There is a fixed time for everybody's death. 'What is written has been written,' may the Lord guard us all, then let what will happen, happen." Muhammad al-Shishini does not worry about war and destruction. On the other hand, Ibrahim 'Abd-al-Khaliq is an electrician who has great hopes about traveling. He said: "I went to Iraq three years ago, and I was able to work there. Thanks be to God, I was able to start a small business in Iraq to earn my living. I returned to Cairo for a short vacation, and I could not stay for a

longer time. Otherwise, I would lose what is due to me, and the store that I established there." I asked him about what is due to the Egyptians and their losses? He said: "Anyone who goes to Iraq has no right to ask the Egyptian Government for anything due to him, because Egypt is going through difficult times and relations between Egypt and Iraq are strained. Whoever travels must be responsible for oneself. I think there are no problems with regard to the money transferred by Egyptians, because most of those who travel nowadays are professionals who do not work in the government sector, but are self-employed." When I warned him about traveling and the possibility of dying there because of the war, he said: "Thanks be to God, I left my four children enough to give them a secure future.... This is the utmost that any man hopes for, and thanks be to God for this."

There was a woman with three children who was lining up. As I approached her, I asked her about her preparedness for traveling to Iraq? She refused to speak to me. I learned from a female official that this woman had come to the Office of Iraqi Interests in Cairo in order to inquire about her husband, who went to Iraq two years ago and who had not sent her any letters. She did not even know his whereabouts so that she could have peace of mind. When this woman obtained no satisfactory answer, she demanded a certificate in order to be able to enroll her children in school.

Another woman in her 40's steps forward in order to obtain a visa to enter Iraqi territory. She wants to search for her husband, who went to Iraq three years ago. He has neither returned nor sent her any letters. This woman believes that her husband got married in Iraq, and she wants to determine her fate.

Two young men knocked on the chief officer's door and entered. They begged him to give them visas to enter Iraqi territory, even though they did not meet the entry requirements. When I tried to warn them about traveling, instead of responding, they asked me to mediate for them in order to obtain visas and be able to travel. Evidently, Egyptians infected with "travel AIDS" to Iraq are craving to go there, even if death will be waiting for them there. Qays Mahmud, the chief officer responsible for issuing visas for those young men, mentioned the case of one of these men who was a confectioner and who was warned by this officer about the lack of sugar in Iraq. The Egyptian replied: "I will go and search for the sugar myself." The second officer in the office added: "We would like Egyptian workers to go to Iraq, but we are presently living through a crisis. The United Nations has prohibited medicine, treatment, food, and milk from entering Iraq. Besides, there is a long list of food items that are not allowed into Iraq. How can we then admit hundreds of workers into Iraq? We strongly request giving Iraqis open visas to Egypt, in accordance with what we give Egyptians who travel to Iraq. We ask for the resumption of relations between the two countries. We consider Egypt's refusal of Iraq's partition as an optimistic omen for possibility of the resumption of relations."

The Blockade

I left the Egyptians who were jamming the counter where applications were handled and met with Qays Mahmud, the chief officer in the office for Iraqi interests in Cairo.

He said: "We gave more than 400 Egyptian nationals entry visas to Iraq, and there were more than 2,000 applications submitted from Egyptian nationals who wanted to travel to Iraq, yet they did not meet our entry requirements. We gave entry visas to all those who returned from Iraq only three months ago. We do not issue visas to those who returned from Iraq a year or two ago. This is because of both the economic and air blockade that is presently imposed on Iraq. There is not enough food for all those from different nations who are coming into Iraq. We want to alleviate the pressures and burdens from the Iraqi economy. Otherwise, how can Iraqis provide food for them? We treat Egyptians well, welcome them, and solve their problems. We supply rations to Egyptians and Iraqis alike, with no discrimination. According to the latest census, there are more than 125,000 Egyptians living in Iraq."

Afghan Veteran on Treatment by State Security

93AF0047B Paris AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic
9 Sep 92 p 26

[Interview with an Egyptian "Afghan" Veteran by Majdi Shandi in Cairo; date not given]

[Excerpts] The number of Egyptian "Afghans" who joined with the Afghan mojahedin to fight Soviet forces is estimated at 5,000. After the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan three years ago, some Egyptian "Afghans" returned to Egypt to settle down in their mother country. AL-DUWALIYAH entered their secret world, and the text of the interview follows: [passage omitted]

[Shandi] What are the organizational ties that bring together Egyptians who have returned from Afghanistan?

[Veteran] There are no ties. The volunteers returned to whatever they were doing before they volunteered. However, there are those who went out with the goal of working as trainers in Afghanistan.

[Shandi] What is the truth about the so-called Afghanistan organization in Egypt?

[Veteran] Egyptian security says that, as a result of its belief that those who are carrying out military or sabotage activities are products of the Afghan war. Perhaps, they will confront us tomorrow with an organization they call the "Bosnia-Herzegovina".

[Shandi] Are there relations between Egyptians returning from Afghanistan and their counterparts in Sudan, Algeria, or elsewhere?

[Veteran] I cannot be a judge of that, but those countries have strong military and police resources. The individuals who went out to Afghanistan are well known.

[Shandi] What can you say about the operations carried out by the Algerian Afghans?

[Veteran] The Algerian youth were strong and enthusiastic by nature. The operations of those in Afghanistan were unorganized.

[Shandi] You mentioned that Egyptian security has begun to differentiate in its treatment between those who were in Afghanistan and others. How is that done?

[Veteran] Security has begun to distinguish between groups in general, and even among various persons within each group, in terms of the mental attitude and ideology of thought of each of them. It also differentiates between those who believe in preaching and those who believe in the use of force to regain power.

[Shandi] Did the Egyptian authorities murder one of the Egyptian Afghans?

[Veteran] According to our information, security killed 'Ala' Muhi-al-Din because of the connection between him and sending people to Afghanistan. They always say that they will strike with an iron fist against violence, but they are also not unmindful of the distinction between those who work on behalf of God in negative ways and those who work positively.

[Shandi] How many Afghans are currently in Egyptian jails?

[Veteran] You should ask about the number who have left the jails!

[Shandi] Why this persecution?

[Veteran] We do not know! However, even those people who do not belong to a single organization are looked at as people who would volunteer, in an instant, to use arms.

[Shandi] Why is that done? You were not involved in the incidents.

[Veteran] The principle is to think the worst of us, until the reverse is proved.

[Shandi] Are there Egyptian Afghans in Sudanese camps?

[Veteran] I do not know, but perhaps that is true!

Human Rights Leader on Regional Issues

93AF0047A Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 14 Sep 92 p 10

[Interview with Egyptian human rights leader Muhammad Fayiq: "Unified Arab Strategy Needed To Protect Us From Israeli Penetration and American Pressures," in Beirut; date not given]

[Text] It is as if Beirut has been able to remain a point of light in the Arab world, attracting people with ideas, programs, and plans.

Apart from its own misfortunes, this city has sympathy for the plight of others. It is a constant venue for a regional conference of many Arab nations, or a meeting place for others who have nowhere else to go. The communique is either published openly or under cover of darkness.

Everyone recognizes this city's power. Last week, there was a meeting of the Secretariat General of the Arab Regional Conference in Beirut. This meeting was limited to people concerned with permanent, ongoing discussion about new occurrences of Arab oppression.

One of those people is the former Egyptian minister of information in the regime of the late president Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, Muhammad Fayiq, who is concerned about the lapse of Arab human rights within every Arab country and abroad. He repeats what he has learned with sorrow and regret. "The American forces released 600 Iraqi tanks after the invasion of Kuwait and allowed them to go to

southern Iraq for more repression. They returned there and raised the flag of protection over southern Iraq, by killing...."

Regarding the Secretariat General's meeting, Fayiq said it was a periodic meeting to prepare for the next conference, which is scheduled for February or March 1993. The venue has not been set. The following is the text of the interview.

[AL-SAFIR] What's new that you have been discussing?

[Fayiq] Several issues, including the blockade of Iraq, the Palestinian question, events in Somalia, what Libya is being subjected to. It is an attempt to fashion a regional view to escape from the perils to which the Arab nation is exposed.

[AL-SAFIR] The permanent issues and dangers.

[Fayiq] True. We have discussed reports about the state of the Arab world.

[AL-SAFIR] It is very tragic.

[Fayiq] We are going through a very difficult stage, especially in light of international and Arab changes and in light of Arab fragmentation. The Arab order has lost its effectiveness, as a result of Arab weakness, and because of this weakness, unfortunately, our problems are becoming internationalized. We see a need for an Arab initiative to handle of our problems. Our most important problem is the fragmentation of the Arab nation.

[AL-SAFIR] A blow for the impossible....

[Fayiq] The task is to assemble the fragments. The Arab situation is very bad, and it became even worse after what happened to Iraq and the Gulf crisis. We have begun to negotiate the Palestinian problem from a position of weakness. I repeat, the task is to bring the fragments together.

Regional Security

[AL-SAFIR] Words with no meaning to Arab citizen, who is drowning in a sea of concerns.

[Fayiq] We must be effective in this international system, which is going through many changes. We must enter as a large entity. This is what we are constantly trying to call attention to. The unity issue has become more urgent. Now, there is only regional security. There is no country with the capacity to achieve its own security single handedly.

We Speak to the Masses

[AL-SAFIR] Who hears these words, leaders of the Arab regimes or people?

[Fayiq] We are always trying to say what we wish, and we are heard, relatively well, through people's organizations and nongovernmental organizations. We speak to the Arab people through these organizations, so that we can send our message to the Arab regimes.

[AL-SAFIR] How dark is the picture in our Arab nation?

[Fayiq] I believe that we have reached the point of no return. The nature of things says that we must begin to go up. There is a feeling of necessity. The situation requires a

new look. For example, political unity is not now being demanded. However, there are many inroads. Matters are forcing us to do something.

Peace Negotiations

[AL-SAFIR] If peace negotiations end in peace agreements, would that mean economic liberalization? In that event, how do you see the Arab situation?

[Fayiq] Economic disunity is one of the disturbing matters. We want to warn our Arab nation about this problem. Along with the issue of liberalizing the market economy, we must be aware of the danger of economic penetration. One must think, here, about independent growth and Arab self-reliance. This is the way to solid cooperation, in order to benefit from these abundant Arab resources, in terms of wealth, land, labor, etc.

Unified Strategy Needed

[AL-SAFIR] But, in light of Israeli superiority....

[Fayiq] I am not optimistic about a rapid solution to what is going on. So far, the solution proposed does not take into account full Arab rights. Palestinians and Arabs have moved as far as possible. There are only unrecognized rights, such as the right to self-determination, the right to return. Israeli intransigence still suggests that reaching a solution will be difficult. We have many fears about American and Zionist pressures and the path America wants to take in imposing solutions. Accordingly, we must have a unified Arab strategy to deal with all of the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese issues, because we warn against the dangers of partial solutions.

[AL-SAFIR] Could that bear fruit?

[Fayiq] Undoubtedly. A unified Arab strategy could stand up to any plot.

Islamists in Egypt

[AL-SAFIR] What is going on in Egypt?

[Fayiq] The media picture of events in Egypt is exaggerated. There is no sectarian strife in Egypt.

[AL-SAFIR] But it is a clash with authorities, which will lead to the breakdown of society.

[Fayiq] There is no political problem, but a security problem with the hardline religious movement, which employs violence. The remedy is democracy. The religious movement has its positive positions concerning national issues. Consequently, they could be beneficial in bolstering our nationalist and popular position.

[AL-SAFIR] To prevent their remaining active in domestic instability....

[Fayiq] In a democracy, all of these trends can coexist peacefully.

[AL-SAFIR] Where is the "Arab" place, in light of these changes, which have not yet ended?

[Fayiq] The real challenge is how we join, or not join, this age. I think that what is new is real awareness of the problems, and that is something that calls for optimism. Diagnosing the illness helps to cure the patient. There are efforts in this regard.

[AL-SAFIR] What about Arab human rights, as you see them as a leader of the Arab Human Rights Organization?

[Fayiq] It is very unfortunate that this year is the year that human rights were violated in the Arab nation more than at any other time. The Arab nation has suffered a relapse. The biggest relapse was in Algeria, the suffering of the Iraqi people at home and internationally, the forced flight of Arabs from Kuwait, and so forth.

[AL-SAFIR] What is the news of the Arab Democratic Nasirist Party?

[Fayiq] The party's emergence will restore vitality to the Egyptian political scene, because it will be a party for the broad masses. It is a party for progress and not *Salafiyan*, in the sense of going back in history. Its outlook is progressive, innovative, focusing on changes while maintaining the invariables which, in essence are, Arab nationalism, independent growth, and balanced society.

[AL-SAFIR] What has delayed holding the party conference?

[Fayiq] A date for the conference has not been set, but it will happen before the end of this year. All of the Arab nationalist forces are calling for it, because it is a party that believes in the Arab direction.

[AL-SAFIR] Does this mean there are no disputes?

[Fayiq] Many reports are being published about the party. I emphasize that there are no disputes at all on the leadership level. The existence of different viewpoints is natural; they are decided democratically. The party gives democracy the utmost importance, because the party that does not exercise democracy will only be dictatorial in power. We will submit the party's program for discussion on the Arab level and to all forces, so that it may be reviewed at the coming party conference.

Official Calls for Counterextremist Cooperation

93AF0047D Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 18 Sep 92 p 2

[Article: "Firmly Establishing Correct Islamic Concepts Is Best Way To Counter Extremism"]

[Text] After visiting Tunis, Dr. Baha'-al-Din Ibrahim, the first assistant minister of interior, has returned to Cairo. Dr. Baha'-al-Din Ibrahim headed Egypt's delegation to the meetings of Arab police and security leaders, which ended 16 September 1992. Just before his departure, Dr. Baha'-al-Din Ibrahim stated that the true concepts of the Islamic religion were emphasized during the meetings. He said that these concepts are the best, surest way of achieving social protection for citizens and countering extremism and violence.

Dr. Baha'-al-Din Ibrahim said that the methods and programs of extremist elements are contradictory to religion. They hide behind religion and operate under false slogans, claiming that the slogans are religious. It has become clear that stressing and firmly establishing religion's correct concepts will expose those elements' positions. It will contribute to protecting Arab societies from this phenomenon. The first assistant interior minister emphasized that the Arab nations have a passionate desire to achieve effective security cooperation.

Dr. Baha'al-Din Ibrahim stated that security cooperation among the Arab nations has become a necessity at this stage more than at any other time, because of the wide-reaching movement of citizens of the Arab nations in all parts of the Arab world. He added that the Arab nations have a strong interest in supporting security cooperation among themselves, because when security collapses in one Arab country, its negative effects are certainly reflected on the other Arab countries. He made clear that during the meetings of Arab security and police leaders, agreement was reached on exchanging data with regard to extremism. The hope is to benefit from the experience of each country in this field.

Real Estate Prices Rise 30 Percent

93AF0022B Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 2 Sep 92 p 9

[Article by Mahmud al-Suwayfi]

[Text] Last summer, prices of apartments in Cairo increased by 30 percent in spite of the increase in the volume of real estate investments, which resulted in the availability of 20,000 new apartments.

Informed real estate sources said that the big increase in the demand for housing units, especially by Egyptians working abroad and Gulf Arabs, has contributed to the local market's ability to accept the new prices. These sources expect that the annual increase in the price of apartments will continue at a rate between 20 and 30 percent over the next five years because the supply is much less than the demand. In addition, there has been a huge increase in land prices and construction costs.

The real estate market in Cairo registered a big increase in building prices during this summer, when those prices reached 1,000 pounds per square meter for the middle sized apartments and 5,000 for the larger units in the more affluent suburbs of the Egyptian capital.

A top official in one of the large companies operating in the area of real estate investments said that the new amendment to the law that organizes construction activities in Egypt, which the legislature issued last May, has had a big impact on the price of housing units all over Egypt, particularly in Cairo and Alexandria.

The law aroused much speculation and criticism when it was issued. This is because it included various provisions, such as restricting the height of buildings in most residential areas and lowering the percentage of the area on which one could build in relation to the total land area of the unit. In addition, the law added new restrictions in order to provide more safety to those living in those units. These restrictions were introduced when it was revealed that the main reason for the collapse of two buildings last winter in Cairo and Alexandria was because the owners did not abide by government provisions that set standards for construction.

On the other hand, investors in real estate activities believe the new government restrictions have led to increases in building costs, as well as putting limitations on ideal land use. The new regulations put a ceiling on the height of new buildings, bringing it down to half the height previously permitted. As a consequence, the price of housing units

increased considerably, and there has been a decline in profits from investing in real estate.

Instant Increase

Local markets were suddenly faced with instant increases in apartment prices immediately after the new law was issued. This increase in apartment prices also took Egyptians working abroad by surprise when they returned at the beginning of the summer to spend their vacations at home. These events perplexed the market for some time. Ultimately, however, buyers accepted the new prices. The proof of this is the increased activity in housing unit sales at present, regardless of the increases in prices.

Arab Demand

A real estate broker in a suburb that is close to downtown Cairo said that sales declined for only a few days in June, after which, activity returned to normal. He added that increased demand from Gulf Arabs and other Arabs for apartments has contributed to the acceptance of the new prices, because those prices were still lower than prices for similar apartments in neighboring countries. Besides, the decline in the value of the Egyptian pound against the Gulf currencies makes these apartments' prices still cheap for the Arabs from other countries.

The government provided new facilities for Arabs to own real estate and removed many bureaucratic restrictions that had restrained the demand for apartments by non-Egyptians. All of this contributed to increased demand by Gulf Arabs to buy housing units in Egypt.

The emergence of Gulf Arabs and other Arabs in the real estate market provided it with new kinds of customers who were ready to make instant payments to construction company owners. This also contributed to boosting prices.

Other than the Gulf Arabs, the large Sudanese community in Cairo represents one of the non-Egyptian communities that has lately joined the demand for residential units in Egypt. There are many Sudanese in Cairo at present. They represent the most important element in the demand for housing. They purchase tens of apartments each month in the Cairo suburbs. Sudanese who work abroad buy such apartments to accommodate their relatives who live in Egypt. The apartment ownership market in Cairo also recorded a considerable increase in the demand from Palestinians and Syrians who come to Egypt for trading activities. There is even demand from Iraqis who oppose the rule in Iraq, and who fled from there and are searching for accommodation in Cairo.

Consequently, the demand from non-Egyptians for residential units has recently become one of the most important types of demand for apartments.

Prices

For medium-sized apartments, 90 to 125 square meters, in the Cairo suburbs, the prices increased from 1,000 Egyptian pounds to 1,500. As for larger units in suburbs close to downtown Cairo—al-Duqqi, al-Muhandisin, and al-'Ajazah—the price increased from a quarter of a million pounds to half a million pounds for a 160-square-meter apartment in condominium complex overlooking the Nile and in Zamalik, which is a reputable suburb. In this same locality, an apartment with an area of 200 square meters in

an old condominium complex was sold for 3 million pounds at an auction organized by one of the banks.

The average cost per square meter of units overlooking the Nile at Ma'adi is about 5,000 pounds. At Heliopolis, it is averaging about 2,000 pounds.

As for houses (villas), which are very popular among Arabs, especially Saudis and Kuwaitis, the price for a 500-square-meter villa in Heliopolis or Nasr City averages between 1 and 3 million pounds. This price would increase to ten millions if the villa were on the main road that connects downtown Cairo to Cairo Airport. A villa that built 35 years ago in the Zamalik suburb was sold for 30 million pounds to a Saudi businessman.

It is worth noting that these prices are three times higher than the prices that were prevailing in the Cairo market three years ago and 10 times higher than prices in 1980! Naturally, these real estate markets are considered luxurious housing markets. The private sector financed 90 percent of these markets, and only 10 percent was financed by state-owned construction companies.

Government Housing

There is another market for residential apartments that is quite independent and encompasses those residential units built by the state through government companies and local apparatuses. This market offers cheap units, yet the units it offers are simpler and not as luxurious as the private-market units. Some units may even be sold unfinished. This means that plumbing, electric wiring, painting, etc., still need taking care of. Nevertheless, buying such a unit involves many complicated procedures that take a long time. From a practical standpoint, these procedures make this type of unit ill-suited for the true real estate market because the principle of supply and demand does not apply when dealing with them.

All the same, the present trend within the Egyptian Government is for the state not to be involved in housing projects. This trend is within the framework of the policy of shifting to a free economic system. This policy would mean that the real estate market would be left exclusively to the private sector. If this should happen, the demand for residential units in this real estate market would increase.

Real Estate Investments

On the supply side, real estate investment was flourishing during the 1980's. The number of companies working in real estate during the last 10 years increased to more than 1,000, with an annual investment of about 6 billion pounds. It is therefore considered the most important investment sector in Egypt. Investment in this sector exceeded investment in both the manufacturing and the tourism sectors. Profits from real estate investment, which reached 100 percent of construction costs during the last four years, contributed to the increase in real estate investment. As there has been increasing demand for residential units, there has also been an increase in the number of units built. In Cairo alone, there are 30,000 units.

However, one director of a real estate company was pessimistic about the future of real estate investment in Egypt. He explained that the construction restrictions in the new law will result in a decrease of residential units on

the market. The number of apartments in every condominium complex will decrease because the new law has put a ceiling on the height of new buildings.

Land suitable for erecting buildings in traditional areas in Cairo and its suburbs is becoming less available because of urban development. In addition, there has been a sharp increase in the price of land for residential building, which increases the total construction cost and, therefore, the sale cost.

Regarding the problem of land shortage, it is found that 90 percent of land available for development in Cairo's older districts has already been used. Meanwhile, the state is slow in establishing new suburbs around Cairo and providing these suburbs with infrastructure to make them ready for construction.

Although there have been great efforts to establish a number of towns around Cairo, such as al-Ashir min Ramadan [10th of Ramadan], October, al-Ubur and others, these towns are not popular among those looking for luxurious residence because they are far from the center of the capital.

This official believes that the state should allow private developers to establish new districts in Cairo's suburbs to overcome the problem of land shortage. He believes that this arrangement should replace the state cartel on urban development, which needs big investments, which are not available within the state budget.

In light of all of these facts, all predictions point to annual increases of 20 to 30 percent in the prices of residential units in Cairo. This means that in the next few years, Cairo will become one of the most expensive cities in the world with regard to the price of residential units. For a long time, Cairo had been known for the cheap prices of its residential units.

Minister on Expansion of Tourist Facilities

93AF0047E London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
11 Sep 92 p 35

[Article: "Our Goal, Expand Our Capacity To Absorb 43 Million Tourist Nights"]

[Text] Fu'ad Sultan, Egyptian minister of tourism and civil aviation, in a conversation with AL-HAWADITH, declared that holding the international [USTA] conference in Egypt was tantamount to a new international birth certificate, confirming Egypt's ability to hold huge international conferences in great numbers, in view of the completion of all resources and components for holding such conferences. In addition, it signals the ability to manage, organize, and prepare for these conferences, and facilitate the entry and egress of tourists coming to Egypt, aside from providing all elements of infrastructure and international communications, with the most modern equipment for interpreting, photography, and television broadcasting via satellite to the various countries of the world.

Fu'ad Sultan stated: "Egypt has a long history and a deep-rooted civilization. Therefore, we have been anxious to prepare a new, modern program to combine culture, antiquity, and seaside promotional and recreational

tourism, with the goal of repeated visits to Egypt—two, three times, or many more times.”

The Egyptian minister of tourism added that the principal goals of the third five-year plan for the tourism sector for 1992-97 include:

- The tourism sector's effective participation in resolving economic and social problems that the community faces, such as improving the balance of payments deficit, increasing the state's share of foreign currency, ending the problem of unemployment, and raising the individual's income level.
- Constant increase in the national composition of tourism goods and services, with the goal of ending importing and encouraging national industries.
- Work to increase numbers of tourists, in order to attain a figure of 4.8 million tourists annually by the end of this plan, by means of expanding the market's capacity to attract new types of tourists.
- Raise the length of stay to 9 nights.
- Raise the tourist's average daily spending to \$125 a night by opening multiple areas of expenditures and improving local products, particularly souvenirs.
- Provide the capacity required to accommodate 43 million tourist nights.
- Provide the requisite technical labor until the end of the plan. This would be nearly 60,000 direct job opportunities and 120,000 indirect jobs.

Fu'ad Sultan added that the plan also includes: continual and intensive participation in international tourist conferences, exhibitions, and associations abroad, in cooperation with the tourism business sector, through joint delegations and unified interests. This should also be stimulated by implementing various methods of advertising that will be carried out by offices abroad, as well as marketing Egypt as a site for conferences, giving incentives, and promoting traditional and modern aspects with regard to the Egyptian tourist product.

The plan also calls for concentrating efforts on attracting tourist traffic of various recreational types, youth, and athletic tourism, preparing and producing pamphlets and advertising materials required to stimulate this tourism both abroad and domestically, along with concentrating on promoting new development areas and conference resources.

The plan calls for coordinating efforts made by the Egyptian General Board to stimulate tourism with the efforts of the parties that could participate in achieving the goal of increased tourist traffic, such as the General Federation of Tourist Agencies, Embassies, diplomatic missions, Egyptian technical offices abroad, governmental agencies, exhibition organizations, and the Ministry of Economy.

The ministry's new plan includes implementing public relations campaigns, to be done in concert with international companies specializing in advertising and public relations, in tourist markets (America, Europe, and south-east Asia), and inviting writers, journalists, and public opinion leaders to visit Egypt, in order to profit from what they publish after returning home. New offices will also be opened in promising markets (Australia, and the former

Eastern bloc). These offices will be strengthened with the requisite human and material resources.

With regard to the plan to stimulate domestic tourism, Minister Fu'ad Sultan said: "Existing domestic tourist offices will be developed and new offices built in places where tourists congregate and places that have been developed tourist-wise. Efforts will also be coordinated with governorates and regional agencies to stimulate tourism and with government agencies, institutions, companies, unions, and the media to stimulate domestic tourism and raise tourism awareness."

The plan includes stimulating tourism awareness by preparing educational material for tourist contests in the media, conducting forums, giving lectures, and organizing conferences in cooperation with the agencies concerned, creating and organizing international and national occasions that will help to develop tourism activities and achieve positive participation for tourists in local activities.

The minister of tourism and civil aviation added that the five-year plan for tourism concentrates on developing resources in tourist areas and promoting them as another individual plan that will implement the general plan, since the ministry's policy, during the third five-year plan (1992-97), concentrates on benefitting from studies that began during the second five-year plan. The results of these studies have begun to be implemented to establish the infrastructure in new tourist areas, by means of easy loans from the International Bank or from certain Arab funds, without burdening the state budget. On the contrary, the ministry, by way of the Tourism Development Board, will pay these loans and interest through the proceeds of the sale of designated lands, which will be provided with all services in terms of infrastructure, roads, and communications.

Fu'ad Sultan stressed that promotion of investment projects in new development areas will be done by means of a promotion plan to print pamphlets and booklets containing data and studies about locations and planned areas offered for future tourism investment. These areas prepared for development will be photographed on video cassettes, to shed light on the tourist map of Egypt. Promotional material will also be prepared for tourism development sites to be offered to investors, as well as inspection trips to areas in which investment is planned. Technical assistance will be given to local areas in this regard, in terms of information about opportunities, resources, and facilities for tourism investment in Egypt.

The plan includes holding conferences to shed light on areas offered for investment to businessmen and investors in Egypt and abroad. The ministry will prepare a plan to promote tourism areas and conduct a number of activities including: providing infrastructure in new and traditional areas; increasing the volume of tourist services in antiquity areas, such as construction of public resthouses and Nile anchorages; distributing tourism products; developing a new coastal area to accommodate domestic tourism on the Mediterranean coast, to ease the burden on local fishermen; and preparing an integrated program to protect the environment from pollution, preserve land and marine life

from pollution and deterioration, and to pay attention to nature gatherings by building centers in which to hold them.

The plan includes encouraging local and small industries in areas of tourist attractions, such as Sinai, al-Wadi al-Jadid, and the al-Bahr al-Ahmar [Red Sea] Governorate, to create an element of stability for citizens, as well as to create new tourist production to increase tourism's economic return for these areas.

Housing Minister Details Development Projects

93AF0047C Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
5 Sep 92 p 6

[Article by Ahmad Husayn: "2 Billion Pounds for New Community Projects in New Plan; International Road From Sallum to Eastern Sinai Planned"]

[Text] Engineer Hasaballah al-Kafrawi, the minister of housing and new communities, announced that \$2 billion has been allocated in the present five-year plan for infrastructure projects and services for the northwest coastal areas, the Sinai, al-Bahr al-Ahmar [Red Sea] Governorate, Wadi al-Jadid Governorate, and the High Dam area.

He said that the current plan concentrates on breaking up the population crunch in the valley and delta areas and providing usable land in outlying districts in order to establish projects and provide thousands of job opportunities for young people.

Projects Being Created

Minister al-Kafrawi told AL-JUMHURIYAH that one of the most important projects that will be completed during the next five years is the international road from al-Sallum westward [as published] to the international border in eastern Sinai. It will cost 190 million Egyptian pounds.

This highway will result in stimulating transit trade between the Asian and African continents through Egyptian territory.

Work will begin on the project to develop the Gulf of Suez, which will be the largest free industrial zone in the Middle East. It will provide 100,000 job opportunities.

A group of Japanese businessmen have asked to participate in this huge project. Ten million pounds has been earmarked to prepare studies with regard to the project. A number of permanent villages for the Bedouin will also be built in the Red Sea area, at a cost of 12 million pounds. Drinking water capacity will be increased for projects, tourist villages, and Red Sea area towns, by means of the al-Karimat pipeline, at a cost of 174 million pounds.

The minister added that the beltway around greater Cairo would also be completed during the current plan. Some 600 million pounds has been authorized to complete work on this highway. Al-Kafrawi said that new projects have been included to increase drinking water capacity, additional sewage services, and to improve roads in these areas.

New Additions

A total of 278 million pounds has been allocated for new projects on the northern coast, including 20 million pounds for second stage of the north coast agriculture project; expansion of the al-Amiriyah water station,

increasing its capacity to 172,000 cubic meters per day, at a cost of 25 million pounds; the second stage extension of the north coast water pipeline by 54 km, costing 80 million pounds; improving the al-'Alamayn-Matruh water pipeline, at a cost of 20 million pounds, and the al-'Akrah water line, which is used for reclamation and agriculture on the north coast, at a cost of 10 million pounds; 90 million pounds for the western part of the international highway; and 15 million pounds for development of Siwah Oasis.

Increased Drinking Water

In the Sinai, concentration will be on potable water capacity, and 561 million pounds has been authorized for this purpose. The East Al-Qantarah network will be completed, at a cost of 1 million pounds, as well as al-Hasanah water pipeline and the Bedouin villages' water network at 2 million pounds, and al-Tur water network at 1.5 million pounds. The southern wells and the Abu Suwayr well will be modernized, and the Abu Durays-al-Tur water line improved and extended 200 km, costing 70 million pounds. The al-'Arish-Rifah pipeline will be extended 45 km, and expansions of al-Qantarah East station will cost 80 million pounds. Two siphons will be installed under the Suez Canal to move Nile water to the Sinai. The project will cost 4 million pounds. In addition, 17 desalinization units will be installed at a cost of 55 million pounds.

Moreover, 100 million pounds have been earmarked for a sewage project in al-'Arish, and 5 million for a sewage station in al-Tur, as well as 25 million pounds for sewage stations in Rifah, Ras Sudr, Abu Rudays, Abu Zanimah, and Saint Catherine.

Electricity capacity will be increased in the Sinai to serve tourist projects by installing 12 transformers at a cost of 45 million pounds.

Some 122 million pounds have been allocated to complete 152 km of al-Hasanah-al-Qimah international eastern border highway, the Bur Fu'ad-Sahl al-Tinah highway, the Port Sa'id beltway, and the East al-Qantarah road.

The minister stated that 2,300 Bedouin and low-cost housing units will be constructed at a cost of 35 million pounds. The minister added that a total of 278 million pounds has been earmarked for Red Sea projects. These projects include completing the second stage of the Ras Gharib-Safajah road, establishing six seawater desalinization condensers in al-Za'faranah and al-Ghardaqah, extending the al-Karimat-al-Ghardaqah water pipeline by 420 km, the al-Ghardaqah fishing harbor, and sewage systems in Ras Gharib and Safajah.

Al-Kafrawi said that 112 million pounds have been allocated for the High Dam lake development projects, where 6,000 feddans will be reclaimed in the areas of al-Salam, al-Shuhada', al-'Alaqi, and Qastal.

Al-Wadi Al-Jadid

Moreover, 232 million pounds have been authorized for projects in al-Wadi al-Jadid area, where 140 new wells will be dug at a cost of 185 million pounds and the third stage of the al-Farafirah road will be constructed, extending the road by 180 km at a cost of 20 million pounds. The sewage project in al-Kharijiyah will also be completed, costing 3

million pounds, as well as the sewage system in al-Dakhiliyah at 7 million pounds. Some 200 housing units will be built, at a cost of 3 million pounds, and 7 million pounds have been earmarked for village lighting in al-Wadi al-Jadid.

IRAQ

'Experts' Say Gold Reserves 250 Tons

92P40024A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
23 Oct 92 p 11

[Report by 'Umar Jastinyah]

[Text] Jeddah—Iraqi experts have stated that Iraq possesses between 250 to 300 tons of gold, 150 tons of which are in general reserves and another 100 tons that were collected from numerous sources, among them contributions collected after the Gulf war.

Iraq formed a committee to collect gold for the war effort from Iraqi citizens who did not participate in war work. It limited the contributions, according to the resolution, to metallic gold. Sources stated that about 10 million Iraqis made contributions, in addition to 1 million individuals whose relations with the ruling Ba'th party obligated them to contribute. Altogether, more than 1.2 million grams of gold were collected in various forms.

The experts said that these figures on the Iraqi gold reserves do not include the gold in the holy shrines in al-Najaf and Karbala' in southern Iraq.

The Iraqi Government formed the Iraq gold committee in April 1991 and included as members the sons of Iraqi leader Saddam Husayn ('Udayy and Qusayy), who raided the homes of rich families and the goldsmith shops to collect quantities of gold from Iraqi markets. One of the Iraqi experts said that the committee bought more than 1 billion dinars of the goldsmiths' gold with Iraqi dinars poorly printed in Baghdad. He added that the Iraqi merchants, numbering about 3,500 to 4,000, were forced "under a variety of pressures" to accept the Iraqi currency despite its fall in value. It has been learned that the gold purchases netted about 15 tons.

The experts stated that the Iraqi leader, from the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980, commissioned Iraqi experts to prepare studies to evaluate gold reserves in the Iraqi markets and among the people. He acted to ensure good reserves for the government, with the condition that he control decisions to disburse the quantities collected if they were used as a last resort.

An Iraqi expert who resides in exile told AL-HAYAH that the Iraqi purchase of 900,000 tons of wheat from Australia through Jordan mentioned last week was conducted in stages beginning at the end of 1991. The expert, who works as a "technical observer studying Iraqi conditions," added that the purchase using gold was the first step and that two other steps followed.

It was learned from Iraqi opposition sources that everything that Iraqi citizens need is available in plenty but at a price of 50 to 70 times more than the original price. The Iraqi debt is estimated at \$100 billion in addition to the

Iranian and Kuwaiti demands for damages inflicted during the Iran-Iraq war and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait some two years ago.

JORDAN

Two Blocs Support Jammu for House Speaker

93AE0024B Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
20 Sep 92 pp 1

[Article: "Constitutional and National Blocs Agree on Single Nominee for House Speaker"]

[Excerpt] During the past few days, quiet consultations have been underway among parliamentary blocs, ending in the agreement of the constitutional and national blocs to have one candidate for both blocs for speaker of the House of Representatives during the coming parliamentary session.

Despite the fact that final agreement was not reached on naming the single nominee for these two blocs, there is one name being frequently mentioned, a man who is not a member of those two blocs, but who is acceptable to a majority of members of the constitutional and national blocs. He is Shaykh 'Abd-al-Baqi Jammu.

Through this agreement, these two blocs have the broadest and strongest base in the House, which could help the nominee, who will be proposed by this base, to have the best opportunity to attain the speaker's post. [passage omitted]

Party Leaders Discuss Intentions, Issues

93AE0024C Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
21 Sep 92 pp 10, 22

[Article by Malik al-Tall: "What Comes After Licensing Political Parties?"]

[Text] In this article, we will try to be a link between the citizen and his issues and the official, for the good of the community.

After establishing the Law of Political Parties, acceptance of applications to license political parties will begin on 1 October, as long as everyone calls for this law to be promulgated. Is there enthusiasm for parties among citizens? What are the parties' preparations to lay the foundation for the start of political action? Before that, however, what do political parties do?

In a democracy, parties can play many roles, including:

- Combining interests of groups and organizations, thereby offering a clear and alternative choice with regard to positions on various issues
- Organizing and mobilizing voters
- Preparing individuals who rally around them to participate in decision making in the event of their victory
- Monitoring the government (executive authority) and expressing their views by their actions, which gives the government the opportunity to adopt other, satisfactory options, since by gathering party reactions concerning the executive authority's decisions, and

taking these reactions into consideration, the government can avoid embarking on specific decisions that could raise these parties' resentment.

It appears clear that there is a downturn in party affiliation, compared with a clear acceptance of elections. One of the reasons for this distinction in Jordan is the negative image that political parties have been burdened with in recent decades. Parties were forbidden to operate, while pressures were put on them in the past. The concept of "partisan" was put on a person who worked against the interests of the nation. Now, after establishing the Law of Political Parties, it is not easy to persuade citizens that parties work for the nation's interests. This point will raise doubts about those who establish parties. Everyone knows that they were against partisan politics in the past. However, we should not forget that their interests were damaged by the existence of parties. Then, they began to attract followers and build their parties, mostly from top to bottom, i.e., a group of persons, or one person, joined with them under a party name. They then began to search for a rank and file.

Jordanian society is a young society. Young people, therefore, will be the target of these parties, especially since those who are older are usually described as conservative in their political positions.

'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali

Engineer 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali, the secretary general of al-'Ahd Party (Covenant Party): "A draft law to operate political parties has not previously been proposed. The general policy was to suspend political parties, which was done in the 1950's, and that remained in force until this action. If I am against partisan politicians, this means that I am against political parties in terms of their old concept which, in brief, was that they wanted to connect this country with outside forces. I am still against that, because the partisan politics that prevailed in the fifties was marked by a spirit that wanted change by revolution and coup d'etat. Therefore, the state's security required stopping pluralistic political activity.

"We want political parties whose goal is political and social reform, developing democracy, and benefitting from development and experience, accumulating that with time. Now, the opportunity is here for real participation by the people in decision making. The ideal mode for this participation lies in the decision to form political parties. We have begun a stage of convincing people about partisanship, beginning with the National Charter, which is considered a common denominator for all parts of the political equation (left, right, and center)."

Partisan Chart for Coming Elections

Concerning his expectations about the results of the coming parliamentary elections, in light of political party activity, 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali said:

"Since there are political parties with specific ideologies, and other parties with specific ideas, the true chart of political parties will only appear after they are approved by the state, in accordance with promulgated laws. Personally, I do not know who will obtain approval, or what that approval requires in terms of the charter and laws. The picture will clear up after each party is licensed. The time

for this to appear is very close. We are starting with principles and goals, which these political parties have offered in order to become authorized.

"In my opinion, it would be best to decrease the number of political parties, since it would make it easier for the citizens to support one of the parties and the matter of varying points of view among the parties would become much clearer. I would like to have no more than four or five parties representing various trends. I would also hope that there is no more than two parties for each orientation."

New Parties Moving Toward the Center

'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali continued: "Something new emerged through my meetings with the masses. Jordanian society is divided into the Islamic movement, leftist nationalists, and the silent center. The latter segment is the majority, which shunned the old political parties and avoided organized participation, out of fear of previous experiences. I favor this segment. They are the guardians of national destiny. They are the guarantee against deviating to the right or the left. The new political parties that are appearing on the Jordanian scene are moving toward this center. They believe that this is a fair, tolerant, liberal balance, free of regionalism, sectarianism, and geographical isolation. They do not operate behind impossible and impractical ideas. This segment will not accept political subservience, no matter what its color."

Milhim al-Tall

Lawyer Milhim al-Tall, secretary general of the Arab Constitutional Front: "If we permit ourselves to go back a few years, I can recall that the idea of forming the Constitutional Front arose as a result of a televised interview conducted by Professor Muhammad al-Sharif with the late al-Sharif 'Abd-al-Hamid Sharaf who, at that time, occupied the post of chief of the royal court. In that interview, al-Sharif 'Abd-al-Hamid announced that freedom of political parties would be granted soon. He said that democracy's principles must be firmly established in Jordan, in order to complete the elements of power required for Jordan's national destiny, since it is the heir to the principles of the Arab Revolution led and unleashed by al-Sharif Husayn Bin-'Ali. This means that, since the beginning of the seventies, we have called for Jordan to live the democratic life. We opposed the National Consultative Assembly on grounds that it does not represent democracy. At that time, we paid the price of our opposition. Later, time proved that our viewpoint was sound. Our people have the awareness to enable them to exercise democratic life.

"Now, we have attained the Constitutional Front I called for, before any other quarter and with the recognition of all parties. Professor Dawidiyah referred to that in his article, published in AL-DUSTUR."

Mijhim al-Kurayshah

Mijhim al-Kurayshah, the secretary general of the Jordanian National Alliance, said:

"I have never been against exercising democracy, or political pluralism, although I have never been a party politician. This does not mean, by inference, that I am against

democracy. At the time we emerged, there were no political parties legally carrying out partisan activity, as a result of emergency circumstances, most importantly, Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Jerusalem. Moreover, I was in public service, through which I offered whatever public service I could to the nation and citizens.

"Since the present Law of Political Parties is in keeping with the laws and regulations, and the interest of the nation and citizens, I have come to think that it is my duty to plunge into this experience, fully convinced that the important thing is faith in God, the nation, the citizens, and the historic leadership of King Husayn. These are the highest national goals we can serve, either through public work or through legitimate party organization, with clear goals and aims. It is not true that serving the nation and citizens can only be done through party activities.

"My conviction stems from my belief that the present and future stages are not only in Jordan but also extend to the Arab arena, that there is only room in this community for respect for the human being, his sacred right to freedom of thought and opinion, and the exercise of this constitutional right in all areas of life, within the framework of the Constitution and laws and regulations.

"Since the king has gone in this direction, issuing the Law of Political Parties, which makes room for political pluralism and founding political parties, we believe that it is our duty to participate in public work. We will turn directly to the citizen, wherever he is, to participate in organizations that have begun to appear all over Jordan."

Marwan Dudin

Marwan Dudin is the official spokesman for the Group of 70. As he said, "This group is composed of 73 persons, who have no personal interests. It is also a group that has not joined forces with any one quarter or another. It tries to work with national parties that represent political moderation (which is not mainly left nor mostly right, but centrist). These organizations, whenever we undertake to serve them, are in contact with each other, exchanging political literature among themselves, and meeting bilaterally and in groups. For our part, we arranged meetings among them, on an average of one meeting per month, benefitting from certain independent intellectuals among them. Because of the Group of 70, there was dialogue among the following parties: al-Nahdah al-Mustaqbal (Future Revival), the National Party, the Arab Nationalists, the Arab Liberals, New Arabs, Justice, Progress, and the Jordanian National Alliance Party. All of us agree that we are all working to create progress in our way of life, to create forward advancement by legal means, believing in legitimacy and the kingdom as a hereditary monarchist, parliamentary state, without shying away from any legitimacy agreed upon in accordance with the Constitution."

Ya'qub Zayadin

Dr. Ya'qub Zayadin, secretary general of the Communist Party: "What distinguishes our party is its adherence to principle throughout the 1950's generally. Our party is also distinguished by its well known and memorable history of struggle during the past years, its clarity of view, and the correct positions it has taken during the crises through

which the Arab nation has passed. The party's issue is not an easy issue. It requires unity of thought and view and organization.

"We are still continuing our struggle as an independent, national party. We also support every positive step for the nation's benefit. We shall oppose every erroneous measure and are fully determined to be the most advanced party. We have resisted all obstacles and methods aimed at attempting to eliminate our party. We have made sacrifices since British rule, and it is our right to enjoy freedom once more. We are active, but we have no aspirations other than to serve our country and people, propelling them forward, up the ladder of prosperity and progress. We are pleased with democracy, despite its negative aspects. However, the cure is more democracy, not less. We extend our hands to all national, struggling parties to work together. Jordan and the rest of the Arab countries are in a painful and frustrating position, which invokes hopelessness. However, all the national political parties and blocs can stand in the face of the foreign enemy and the evils at home, including unemployment, inflation, and the economic situation. We also extend our hands to all principle ideologies (political Islam, nationalism, and leftist movements). I must say that the ship of Arabism and Islam is close to sinking. We must seriously think about a solution to our problems."

Report Analyzes Results of Deputies' Arrests

93AE0018C London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 17 Sep 92 p 5

[Article: "Confrontation Arises With Muslim Brotherhood"]

[Text] The latest information from Jordan indicate that members of the Muslim Brotherhood movement are still being arrested and that the security forces have discovered six warehouses containing large amounts of weapons and explosives. The situation in Jordan is open to new developments that could lead some deputies to submit a collective resignation from the legislature. Another possibility is the resignation of the Cabinet that is currently presided over by al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir.

Even though this campaign that started with the arrest of the two deputies, Layth Shubaylat and Ya'qub Qirrish, has been going on for some time, people still wonder why the Jordanian authorities took such a measure and what is the main reason for these arrests

Saber Rattling

Some sources link these events with the developments of the Middle East crises. The sources claim that a huge step is expected to be taken in order to solve the situation by next November. This is the reason that prompted the Jordanian government to resort to saber rattling in the face of the Muslim Brotherhood and other opposition groups prior to taking the expected step.

The sources add that the Jordanian authorities chose to start with arresting the two deputies Layth Shubaylat and Ya'qub Qirrish because they are the weak link and also because a direct clash with the Muslim Brotherhood may be too expensive, bearing in mind the political and organizational status of this group in the Jordanian arena.

It is a known fact that Muslim Brotherhood has 21 seats in the parliament and leads a block that includes 33 deputies. They also have hospitals and colleges, as well as some banks and a number of important economic and social institutions.

Although the authorities deny such allegations, Muslim Brotherhood feel the sting and claim that these measures aim at weakening them before taking any actual and concrete steps before solving the Middle East problem. They also think that such measure aim at dealing them a hard blow before the coming elections.

The deputies of the Islamic Movement issued a statement defending the two arrested deputies and linked the arrest to raising the issue of the financial and administrative corruption during the latest special session of the parliament and also to the developments in the area during the last two years.

According to information available to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, after the widespread arrests and the attacks on the weapons warehouses of Hamas movement, Muslim Brotherhood formed a delegation that met with Crown Prince Hassan and assured him that the weapons were not to be used in Jordan but were to be sent help the West Bank and Gaza Strip resist Israeli occupation.

According to this information, the delegation told the Crown Prince that they had bought these weapons during the beginning of the second Gulf crisis on the advice of former Prime Minister Mudar Badran. It is known that Muslim Brotherhood had participated in Badran's cabinet prior to his resignation late last year. They are considered very close to this Jordanian official, who still has great influence on the Jordanian political scene.

Some claim that these arrests, which included the Muslim Brotherhood and their supporters, came within the framework of the long struggle among the Jordanian powers. They also claim that these arrests are to be considered a victory for the bloc of former Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i, who claims that the accusations of corruption against him were masterminded by Badran.

Some circles note that this new wave of arrests happened while King Husayn was out of the country convalescing after surgery in the United States. The same circles also claim that the Ma'an demonstrations of 1989 in the south also took place while the King was abroad. The same also goes for the events at al-Zarqa' that some Army units started during the late 1970's.

There are questions whether all of this is just coincidence or whether there are some powers that resort to these methods while the King is out of the country for unknown reasons and aims.

The fact is that observers of the Jordanian scene during the last few weeks have noticed that some governors have been replaced for the declared reasons of administrative reform during the same period. These governors include Muhammad al-Shuwayki, former governor of al-Zarqa' and Qassim Firayah, former governor of Ma'an.

Iran's Role

Going back to the arrest of the two deputies, Layth Shubaylat and Ya'qub Qirrish, a high official in the

Palestinian Liberation Organization has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Qirrish has not had any relations with PLO for the last two years. The relations between the two sides were severed after the leaders in PLO noticed that he had some suspicious contacts.

Qirrish, who is currently held in al-Juwaydah prison outside Amman, is refusing to answer any questions, saying only that his colleague, Layth Shubaylat is not connected with the confiscated weapons or with the Vanguard of Islamic Youth, which Qirrish formed to work within the occupied territories.

After his relations were severed with the PLO, Qirrish attempted to establish contacts with Libya and Iran. Few months ago, he attended a conference in Tehran aimed at confronting the current peace process in the Middle East. During this conference, he had financial and organizational meetings with Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front (for the Liberation of Palestine)-General Command, who is currently in Tehran after being accused of participating in the well-known Lockerbie incident.

The other arrested deputy, Layth Shubaylat, is originally from al-Tufaylah village in Jordan. His father, Farhan Shubaylat, was the Jordanian ambassador to more than one Arab country, but during the events between the Palestinian resistance and Jordan in September of 1970 he sided with PLO and asked for political asylum in Tunisia, where he lived with his family for a number of years.

It seems that Layth Shubaylat had exposed his relationship with PLO. It is rumored that the Tunisian authorities deported him, his father, and family after a hearing phone call between him and one of the leaders of Black September Movement in the wake of the Munich incident. During the years that followed, Layth Shubaylat joined one of the Islamic movements, where he became a student of Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali. He was very close to Muslim Brotherhood, but he had no organizational relations with them.

Expectations

The question is what will happen next? Will the government retreat and release the two deputies and the other detainees, or will the events escalate, which will lead to many surprises?

Nothing is certain, but it is expected that the confrontation will continue unless King Husayn intervenes and reconciles matters, as he usually does. If the events continue to escalate, it will not be a surprise if a large number of deputies resign or the parliament is dissolved or if the Cabinet resigns and is replaced with a new Cabinet.

House Loses Libel Case, Drops Others

Al-Rifa'i Found Innocent

93P40031A Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
20 Oct 92 p 1

[Report by Khulud al-Ja'uni]

[Text] Amman—Yesterday the Amman Court of First Instance held a public session under Judge 'Id al-Lawzi, during which it ruled former Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i innocent of the charges of slander and libel that had been

directed against him by the House of Representatives. These charges were related to an announcement that Mr. al-Rifa'i made that was published in the local press on 4 August 1992.

Charges Dropped Against Citizens

93P40031B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
3 Nov 92 p 4

[Text] Amman—The Permanent Office of the Jordanian House of Representatives has stopped its prosecution of a number of citizens whom it had taken to court on charges of libel or slander. The office issued a statement on this subject after yesterday's meeting chaired by House Speaker Dr. 'Abd-al-Latif 'Arabiyyat.

The House of Representatives had charged a number of citizens from the Governorate of al-Tafilah in southern Jordan with slandering the House of Representatives after they protested in the House's halls and offices following its decision to charge Mahmud al-Hawamidah, the former minister of public works from al-Tafilah Governorate, with financial corruption. The House of Representatives had also charged Iyyad al-Qattan, the director of the Royal Cultural Center, with slander after he sent a telegram—described as vitriolic—to the House protesting its decision to take a number of al-Tafilah citizens to court.

Several voices have recently come to the fore to protest decisions by the House or its speaker's office to take certain citizens to court. This has prompted the speaker and his Permanent Office to make the decision to stop the prosecution.

Writer Sees Liquor Ban as Constitutional Issue

93AE0024A Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
20 Sep 92 p 2

[Article by Lawyer Muhammad al-Sabihi: "Draft Bill to Ban Liquor, Where Is It?"]

[Text] A proposed draft law to ban liquor is about to cause a constitutional crisis, which will require finding a rapid solution.

In the last regular session of the House of Representatives and after stormy discussions, the House agreed to a proposal, submitted by a large number of representatives, to prepare a draft bill to ban alcoholic beverages. Article 95 of the Jordanian Constitution allows 10 or more members of the Senate and House to propose laws, and every proposal is referred to the committee concerned for expression of ideas. If the House deems the proposal acceptable, it is referred to the government to be put into draft legislation form. The House of Representatives did, in fact, refer the proposal to the government to be put into draft legislation form. This caused many observers to wager that the bill would not be forthcoming from the government until the end of the current House of Representatives' constitutional term, on the expectation that the next House would be of a different composition.

From a review of the text of Article 95 of the Constitution, we find that it requires the government to offer the proposed draft legislation to the House in the same session

in which the House proposed it or, at the latest, in the next regular session. The verbatim text is as follows:

"If the House deems the proposal acceptable, it refers it to the government to be formulated as draft legislation and to be submitted to the House during the same session or in the session that follows."

According to the text of Article 78 of the Constitution, the House's regular session begins on 1 October, i.e., in a few days, and there has been no sign that the government has prepared a draft bill outlawing alcoholic beverages. This might result in a constitutional dispute within the House, which might require a decision to refer the matter to the Supreme Council to interpret the Constitution, based on Article 122.

Will the draft law banning liquor cause widespread debate over the deputies' immunity, in addition to other diverse subjects? Will it cause a warm autumn between the government and the House of Representatives?

KUWAIT

Al-Sabah Family Accused of Plundering Country

93AE0042A Paris AL-MUHARRIR in Arabic
5 Oct 92 p 2

[Text] The Gulf Investment Company, which handles the Kuwaiti "Government's" money and invests it abroad, prepared its financial statement (profits and losses). The Al-Sabah family kept this statement hidden because it unveils embezzlements and plundering worth millions of dollars. The Kuwaiti opposition published the text of this statement in Beirut under the title *The Yellow Book: The Story of the Yellow-Faced People That Plunder Kuwait*. AL-MUHARRIR has excerpted some of those stories of Kuwaiti-style plundering.

Hisham al-Rayyis, brother of Ghazi al-Rayyis, the Kuwait ambassador to London who was recently transferred to Beijing, is one of Sheikh Jabir's financial brokers and his favorite economic adviser. He was president of the board of directors of the Gulf Investment Company, which is a government company, but he mixed the company's money with his own and managed it as if it were a private ranch that belonged to him and his brothers Sabah, Salah, and Ghazi, as indicated in the report by the company's new president. He used the company's money to buy projects worth millions and then sold them to the company, taking what he could of the "forbidden money" out of "public money." He borrowed money and never repaid it. The following are some of the frightening examples and figures mentioned in the report of the company's board of directors.

First, in the dealings with Hisham al-Rayyis, "former member of the board," regarding his share in al-Khalijyah complex, the following incidents were proven to have happened.

- The Gulf Investment Company paid on behalf of Mr. Hisham al-Rayyis, "former member of the board," the price for his share in al-Khalijyah complex. He never paid this amount, and it was entered in the current debit account. The value of his share was \$6,234,069.45.

- The company later on bought his share, paying \$34,135,005.46, many times over the original amount.
- This deal netted a loss of \$13,661,202.00

Second, in dealings with al-Rayyis Commercial Group:

- On 7 December 1982 the Gulf Investment Company bought shares in Kuwaiti and Gulf companies from al-Rayyis Commercial Group. The value of these shares totaled \$27,946,741.49.
- These shares were bought according to their declared value, without accounting for the demand on these shares. The deal resulted in a loss of \$13,229,624.03.

Third, the current account with the Commercial Garment Company:

- The total amounts of money paid to this company either in cash or in money transfers was \$10,687,147.93. It is known that Al-al-Raeyis are investors in the commercial complexes.

Fourth, the current account with a real estate improvement company:

- This private company was subsidized with \$50,145,023 in public money.

Fifth, the Kuwait Chemical Company:

- The Gulf Investment Company bought \$232,000 and 250 shares of this company from a small investor, paying 1 kuwaiti dinar per share as per the instructions of the former chairman of the board, Sabah al-Rayyis.
- We learned that \$5,368,062.28 was paid from the account of the Gulf Investment Company to a number of investors in the Kuwait Chemical Company for their shares in it. After the concerned authorities refused to issue a permit to incorporate the company. The investors began asking Sabah al-Rayyis for their money back because he was one of the company's founders. These funds were entered as investments in the Kuwait Chemical Company from the Kuwaiti investment company according to the instructions of Sabah al-Rayyis.

Sixth, The Lebanese-Gulf Investment Company:

- The Gulf Investment Company paid \$2,549,809.06.
- The same company wired \$1,008,750 to the Lebanese company, out of which \$914,080 were capital costs incurred by the above-mentioned company and the rest was penalty for delayed payments.
- 950,000 shares of the above-mentioned company were transferred to from the founders to the name of Sabah al-Rayyis, while the remaining 5 percent of the shares of the company are still in the name of its chairman of the board, George Hana Jum'a. These shares are reserved for Sabah al-Rayyis, as indicated from the statement of George Hana Jum'a.
- George Hana Jum'a said that he received \$8,795,348.03 from the Lebanese Gulf Investment

Company, which he used to invest in real estate for himself, promising to issue the deed for the above-mentioned company as soon as possible, which has not happened so far.

Seventh, GIP [expansion not given]:

- Upon the request of Sabah al-Rayyis, the board of directors agreed to sell a building in Paris to a retirement fund in France for 210 million French francs.
- Instead of reinvesting this money in the company's business, it was used to pay \$10 million of Sabah al-Rayyis's personal debts and \$5 million of al-Rayyis's debts and a debt to GIIPNV [expansion not given], in addition to \$6,388,876 in liabilities and expenses.
- It was learned that the company that was managing the portfolio of the Parisian company was owned by Sabah al-Rayyis. Accordingly, the management of the company froze all of the activities of the above-mentioned company that are related its Parisian investment portfolio, subject to prior Kuwaiti approval.

Eighth, GIIP [expansion not given]:

- The above-mentioned company was established in the Netherlands Antilles in 1980 with a fully paid capital of \$15 million.
- Sabah al-Rayyis, who was an officer of the above-mentioned company because of his position as chairman of the board of the Gulf Investment Company, sold a mansion to the above-mentioned company for \$11,506,511, while its actual price, according to the original sales contract, was about \$2 million. This transaction was criticized by Fidiciaire General De Luxembourg, which audited the above-mentioned company. The reason for their reservation is that the seller of the mansion is one of the company's original managers.
- It was discovered that this company owns 2,931,035 shares in GIP. The shares were issued to the account of Ghazi al-Rayyis's company and were registered in its name according to Certificate No. 35. Sabah al-Rayyis used these shares as collateral at the Tunis International Bank in return for concessions given to the al-Rayyis Commercial Group, according to a written statement signed by Sabah al-Rayyis himself.

Ninth, The Financing of al-Humaydi Trade and General Contracting Company:

- The former chairman of the board of directors, in collaboration with his former vice chairman, Walid 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Humaydi, financed al-Humaydi Trade and General Contracting Company and al-Humeidi Group. These two business's debts reached \$2,555,519.35, none of which has been paid yet.

While we are sparing no effort to take all legal actions to retrieve the rights of the company, some of these rights could not be retrieved except by means of a liability suit

against the chairman of the board and some of its members, according to Article 156 of the Law of Commercial Companies.

For the record, the Amir, who is imposed upon Kuwait, has requested a stop to the prosecutions and that all these actions be forgotten. Haven't we said that Ghazi al-Rayyis is his "ambassador" to Beijing and his accused brothers are his partners? What is so strange about that?

MOROCCO

EC Relations, Referendum Results Discussed

93AF0076A UNODC AFRICA CONFIDENTIAL in
English 25 Sep 92 p 7

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] The results of September's referendum on constitutional reform pose new problems for King Hassan II's European supporters. They have been hoping that positive results from Morocco's elections season—now running until parliamentary polls are held, some time in November—would convince critics that the kingdom is on a new liberal path, deserving maximum support from Europe to stem the tide of radical Islam in North Africa. This would help the European Community (EC) Commission and member states (led by France, Portugal and Spain) to persuade the European Parliament in Strasbourg to unblock Morocco's financial protocol, worth 463 million European Currency Units (Ecus), held up by the Parliament's opposition to Hassan's record on human rights and policy on the disputed Western Sahara.

The referendum result—a 99.96 percent 'yes' vote from a 97.25 percent turnout—has left European officials searching for new ways of limiting the damage: Morocco is still seen as an important ally in the southern Mediterranean and European governments and the EC would like to provide increased support. This is reflected in EC plans to make Morocco the first recipient of its new free-trade zone agreements. Both sides are taking this initiative very seriously, with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Abdelatif Filali, his senior civil servant Al Fassi Fihri and the widely-respected Foreign Trade, Investment and Tourism Minister, Hassan Abouyoub, taking charge in Rabat.

Within Morocco, the referendum was seen as a triumph for Interior and Information Minister Driss Basri, who again showed his ability to mobilise officialdom to carry out Hassan's desires. The opposition *Bloc Democratique*—of which the main component parties told their supporters to stay away, with the exception of Ali Yata's 'communist' *Parti du Progres et du Socialisme* (PPS)—was shown that the main target of its recent campaigns, Basri, remained all-powerful.

Basri also delivered a near unanimous 'yes' vote in the Sahara—an unbelievable result but one which, with the *Polisario Front* showing signs of disintegration, underlines Rabat's view that unless the United Nations can organise a referendum (increasingly unlikely), the disputed territory forms an integral part of Morocco.

The referendum result served Basri well in his competition for access to Hassan. Informed observers note the largest 'no' vote was registered in Essouira (1,233 of the 4,844 'no'

votes cast). This is the home of one of his main rivals, Andre Azoulay, who represents the more liberal wing emerging in the ruling establishment gathered round the royal *seraglio*. Azoulay will gain his revenge when in mid-October the EC Commission President speaks at a conference organised by this ex-banker—a major propaganda coup, even if the visit to Morocco is not on official EC business.

Europe will now look for change in the rural and communal elections to be held on 16 October and for advances by the opposition over 'loyalist' parties in the parliamentary elections, to be held in November. Hassan has indicated that these elections will be free and fair: all sides tacitly accept that he will remain at the centre of local politics. To ease pressures building up in the political system, Hassan could allow the opposition to gain in strength.

There are suggestions that the palace is courting the largest socialist party, the *Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires* (USFP), led by Abderrahmane Yousoufi, with the promise of seats in government. The other major *Bloc Democratique* member—the nationalist party, *Istiqlal*—is being frozen out, however, in a classic case of Moroccan divide-to-rule. So far the USFP has not played ball: the temptation to do a deal with the Palace has been tempered by the referendum result, the continued imprisonment of senior party and trades union official Noubir Amaoui, and the bitter experience of past secret pacts between Palace and opposition (especially for *Istiqlal* whose leader, M'Hamed Boucetta, spent a period as foreign minister).

Past form suggests that local elections in October will see Basri's squadrons of *caids*, *mokkads* and other local notables delivering a large loyalist vote. The November legislative elections could be a different story, especially in urban centres. A good performance by the opposition would please international opinion. The question is now whether the main opposition parties can be convinced it is still worthwhile taking part.

The referendum result and uncertainty over the elections could now mean the EC protocol might not even go back to the European Parliament in October. Rabat has indicated it doesn't want it anyway: it wants a much larger package of financial support to accompany the free trade agreement, arguing that it should be treated like Spain and Portugal when they joined the EC in 1986. Brussels will reject this.

What is expected is that by the end of 1992, the EC Commission will present a draft free-trade agreement to its Council of Ministers. Negotiations will probably take most of 1993 and lead to the formal special relationship with Europe that Rabat craves. It wants this so badly that officials say privately they are prepared to see the troubled Arab Maghreb Union go under, with Morocco instead enjoying closer bilateral relations with Europe than its neighbours (and rivals for finance and investment), Algeria and Tunisia. It is the search within the West for a new relationship, rather than the feeble pressure exerted by legalised opposition groups in Morocco, that could produce the country's freest and fairest elections yet—even if the referendum result showed that, with Hassan still unprepared to hand over any significant power, Hassanian

democracy can still be more redolent of the old Eastern Europe than of the Western Europe with which Rabat sees its future.

Diplomatic Ties To Moldova Established

93AF0090C Rabat ALMAGHRIB in French
11 Oct 92 p 4

[Text] The Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Moldova established diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level effective 8 October 1992, according to a joint communique signed by Ahmed Snoussi, Morocco's permanent representative to the United Nations, and his Moldovan counterpart Tudor Pantaru.

The communique explains that the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries—which stems from their desire to “develop and consolidate the relations of friendship and cooperation” between them—is in conformity with the provisions of the Vienna Convention covering diplomatic relations that took effect on 18 April 1961 and is based on the principles contained in the UN Charter.

New Constitution Addresses Human Rights

93AF0061A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
3 Sep 92 p 8

[Article by Muhammad Dharif: “Human Rights Under the New Moroccan Constitution”]

[Text] The second article of the Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights proclaimed by the French Revolution in August of 1789 states that the purpose of all political systems is to safeguard human rights. What are those rights?

Human rights passed through two major stages of development.

The first began with the promulgation of the American Constitution, reached a pinnacle with the French Revolution in 1789, and ended with World War II. Human rights during that period were a national [internal] affair. Among the outstanding doctrines penned during that period were those promulgated by the French Revolution, such as the Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights, issued in 17 articles in August of 1789. Its first article stipulated that “people are born equal and free.”

Another was the Constitution of 1739, which included 124 articles of which 35 were dedicated to human rights. Most significant among them was an article stating that “when government violates the rights of the people, the right to revolution becomes the most sacred.”

The second stage of human rights development began after of WWII and was forcefully manifested in the promulgation of the 30-article World Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 1948. This was complemented on 16 December 1966, when the UN General Assembly issued the 53-article International Manifesto To Safeguard Civil and Political Rights and the 31-article International Manifesto To Safeguard Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

During this second period, human rights became an international issue rather than a mere internal affair.

The countries of the world are currently undergoing a stage of “human rights universality” that requires all political systems to declare commitment to human rights and respect for them. This has been true of the new Moroccan Constitution, which states in the third paragraph of its preamble that the Kingdom of Morocco reiterates its adherence to human rights as they are recognized worldwide. What, then, are those human rights that are recognized worldwide and to which Morocco declares adherence?

Those rights fall into two categories. Legal and political rights and social and economic rights. The new Moroccan Constitution has, as its two predecessors did, adopted those two categories of rights and so stipulated in its Chapter 1. That prefacing is significant.

On legal and political rights, the Constitution stipulates that all Moroccans are equal (Chapter 5), forbids arrests and punishment without due process (Chapter 10), and recognizes the freedom to travel and take up residence, the freedom of opinion and expression, of holding meetings, of forming societies, and of joining unions and political parties (Chapter 9). It recognizes the freedom of religion (Chapter 6) and the right to vote which the constitution vests equally in men and women who may equally enjoy political rights (Chapter 8). It also stipulates the sanctity of [private] correspondence (Chapter 11).

On social and economic rights, the Constitution states the right of all citizens to hold public jobs and positions (Chapter 12), the right to education and to employment (Chapter 13), the right to strike (Chapter 14), and the right to own property (Chapter 15).

It is not enough for a constitution to list categories of human rights. Guarantees must be provided to safeguard those rights, but that is a topic for another discussion.

Measures Taken Against Traffickers, ‘Illegals’

93AF0124A Algiers EL WATAN in French
12 Oct 92 p 12

[Text] The Moroccan Government has approved a number of energetic measures against the smuggling of immigrants into Spain from Moroccan territory and drug trafficking, it was reported in Madrid.

A set of instructions from Morocco's king calling for government action against immigrant smuggling and drug trafficking has been announced in Rabat. An unrelenting battle will be waged, according to the king, “in the interests of Morocco and the international community.”

The Moroccan police and security forces will take part in the effort, joining naval units in patrolling the Moroccan coastline and dismantling immigrant smuggling rings, it was reported by ABC, a daily newspaper published in Madrid, which quoted the Moroccan minister of the interior.

ABC also reported that the Moroccan king has instructed the justice ministry to draft “an arsenal of legal measures” toughening the penalties for these illegal activities and facilitating the indictment pending an in-depth judicial investigation of anyone suspected of or connected with drug trafficking or immigrant smuggling.

According to ABC, the Moroccan Government was responding to pressures from European governments in combination with positions taken by the Moroccan opposition against "immigrant smuggling rings" operating in the open. The Moroccan Government has reportedly informed Spain's minister of the interior of the newly approved measures.

Madrid reacted favorably to the announced measures. In Cadiz in southern Spain, the Spanish secretary of state for security, Mr. Rafael Vera, had recently met with his department's officials in charge of combating drugs and illegal immigration.

In related matters, the authorities of Caceres have decided that 400 illegal aliens—most of them Moroccans—working in the tobacco harvest will be expelled in coming days.

Attempts to smuggle illegal aliens into Spain in small, make-shift boats sailing from Tangier or Ceuta have increased in recent months. Many have died while crossing the Strait of Gibraltar in what are often perilous conditions.

According to estimates in the Moroccan press, as reported by newspapers in Madrid, nearly 1,000 would-be emigrants from North and sub-Saharan Africa drowned in the Strait in 1991.

Spain's Civil Guard has arrested several hundreds of those who made the crossing. A large number of them were sent back to Morocco once their identity was established.

The Moroccan authorities refused until then to admit the sub-Saharan Africans, citing a lack of proof that they had sailed from the Moroccan coast. (APS)

TV Access of Voters Said Fostering Democracy

93AF0090A Rabat L'OPINION in French 9 Oct 92 p 1

[Editorial by Mohamed Idrissi Kaitouni: "A Program and the Human Element"]

[Text] The campaign for the 16 October municipal [comunales] elections is continuing, but with this distinctive feature: citizens this time are able to judge the intentions of the different political organizations and evaluate their programs by listening to their speeches as broadcast via radio and television.

Access to these audiovisual media is therefore a valuable attainment that will help to consolidate democracy and intensify national public interest in governmental affairs.

This effort to heighten the sensitivity and awareness of the masses is essential to the practice of democracy and to the exercise of constitutional rights.

It enables citizens to give to democracy at the local level—and to the management of municipal affairs—all the attention they deserve.

It also enables citizens to compare programs, to distinguish between what is realistic and what is demagogic, and to make a useful judgment of the ideas thus conveyed.

In order to make their definitive choice, citizens should be convinced that—on balance—the program offered them meets their expectations, and that when the program is implemented it will fulfill their aspirations and ensure the

betterment of their municipality. This would be achieved by equipping their municipality with the basic infrastructure it requires in order to satisfy the needs of its residents.

The program should cope with the imperatives of the present and should plan in advance to solve problems that will arise in the future.

Whatever the scope and importance of the program offered to the voters, however, the most important thing for them to know is who should put it into practice—in other words, to be informed concerning the men or women who will implement it, and how they will do so.

The human element is fundamental to the management of local affairs. Indeed, if you entrust the responsibility for the management of local affairs to incompetent persons, to opportunists and speculators, to persons who do not meet the criteria for sincerity, honesty, dedication, and integrity, you cannot expect that the municipality will experience development. On the contrary, the municipality will inevitably decline, and the living standards of its residents will worsen instead of improving.

The choice of the candidates—with consideration given to their personal qualities and moral conduct—is just as important as the choice of the programs they are offering.

In reality these two factors complement each other, because however ambitious the program, it cannot be implemented in the absence of good people who are aware of their responsibilities, dedicated to their daily activities, and faithful to their commitments.

Aug Cost of Living Figures Reported

93AF0090B Rabat ALMAGHRIB in French
11 Oct 92 p 4

[Text] The Directorate of Statistics announced that during August 1992 the cost of living index (covering 210 different items) rose to 479.8 from the figure of 477.3 for the previous month—an increase of 0.5 percent.

This rise is due mainly to the food group, whose index rose 0.8 percent. Within this group the principal changes were: eggs up 13.3 percent, fresh vegetables down 5.6 percent, meat up 4.1 percent, spices and seasonings down 3.0 percent, and fish down 3.1 percent.

The housing group also shared in the overall increase, with a not inconsiderable rise of 0.3 percent. This rise reflected basically the figures for the subgroups "heat/light/water" (up 0.9 percent) and "rent" (up 0.3 percent).

The "clothing" and "health maintenance and care/public health" groups each rose 0.1 percent. The rise in the first group reflected the rise in the subgroup "footwear" (up 0.40 percent), and the rise in the second reflected the rise in the subgroups "health maintenance services" (up 0.2 percent), and "nursing services" (up 0.1 percent).

The "transportation/leisure time activities/miscellaneous" group recorded a slight increase of 1 percent, which in practice resulted from opposing variations recorded by the subgroups "mass transit" (up 1.1 percent), "recreation" (up 0.6 percent), "private transportation" (up 0.2 percent), and "miscellaneous expenses" (down 0.3 percent).

We may also note that the cost of living index for August 1992 rose 3.3 percent compared to the figure for the same month of 1991, whereas the average index for the first eight months of 1992 rose 5.6 percent by comparison with the same period of 1991.

Graduate Youth Unemployment Crisis Examined

93AF0061B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
10 Oct 92 p 8

[Report from Rabat: "In Morocco, 75 Percent of Graduates Have Been Unemployed for Longer Than a Year"]

[Text] Unemployment in Morocco has been worsening at fluctuating rates since the early 1980's. In 1989, for example, unemployment climbed to 10.3 percent, from 9.3 percent in 1987. Unemployment is growing among graduate youths, and especially among high school graduates (23.8 percent) and holders of higher degrees (17.6 percent). This compares with unemployment rates of 14.7 percent for those with a grade school education and only 4.5 percent for those without any formal education.

Unemployment is most severe among holders of diplomas and gets worse as the educational level gets higher. For instance, unemployment is at the rate of 21.4 percent among those with a grade-school education and rises to 38.4 percent among holders of baccalaureates [high-school diplomas] or the equivalent. The rate drops slightly among university graduates and is expected to reach 30.5 percent between the periods 1991-95 and 1996-2000. The search for jobs during those years is expected to be at the rate of 3.2 percent—much higher than the demographic growth rate of 2.5 percent.

In view of this worsening phenomenon among young university graduates, the National Council for Youth and the Future was created 8 July 1990 to prepare Moroccan youths for the challenges of the future, equip them to enter the nation's production system, and enable them to seize available employment opportunities. Criticisms have been leveled at the council since its inception, and especially during its early stages, because its purpose was commonly misconceived to be the placement of unemployed youths.

The following are various opinions sought by AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT on this issue:

Employment Agency

Muhammad al-'Arabi, an administrative official of the council's secretariat general, said:

"The Council for Youth and the Future is not an employment agency, as many would believe. It operates under the royal decree by which it was founded on 20 February 1991. Article 2 of the decree stipulates that the council's purpose is to help adapt educational and training systems to the requirements of the Moroccan economy and to adequately prepare youths for the future. The council, in pursuing that goal, has collected qualitative and quantitative employment data, analyzed the potential for development in Morocco, and proposed structural incentives and reforms to raise the level of employment.

"It is the council's function, therefore, to research and study the means to promote employment. It is to do so through discussions, consultations, and the consensus of

its constituent components such as government officials, Chamber of Deputies committee chairmen, professional societies, and student representatives of vocational and educational institutions.

"This is the purpose for which the council has been created, and I hope that everybody realizes that it is not an employment agency."

Definition and Helplessness

Muhammad al-Baqqali, an administrative official of the youth auxiliary of al-Istiqlal Party, said:

"The Council for Youth and the Future was created as an abstract, lacking in real resources. Yet it has helped define (the unemployment) problem, even though it has been impotent to resolve it despite its various internal economic and political components. I believe that agencies such as the National Council for Youth and the Future should be vested with distinct legal powers that would render them effective tools and legal constitutional frameworks for finding solutions to the employment puzzle."

Al-Baqqali believes that it has become imperative to reexamine the council's philosophy in order to define its constitutional authority in the field of youth employment, rather than have it continue to function as an "information agency."

He added: "It must be resolved to seek a solution through a national dialogue on unemployment. I do not believe that the Moroccan economy, with its various mining, marine, industrial, and farm components, is incapable of absorbing the unemployed. I also believe that a dialogue would draw broad outlines for possible solutions either through a constitutional national council or through programs launched by unions, parties, and various other organizations. Furthermore, the private sector must be mandated to respect its contribution to comprehensive development rather merely flirt with it."

Figures and Statistics

'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Samrawi, director of the council's statistics department, spoke to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT about the statistics:

"A census conducted by the council in February 1991 puts the number of unemployed graduate youths at 100,000. This group is primarily composed of Baccalaureate holders (50 percent), university graduates (22 percent), and technicians (21 percent). This is the result of accumulating employment applications that went unfulfilled in the 1980's. The first stage of the graduate youth project made it possible to place some 42,000 youths."

He added: "Available employment opportunities represent a bit of difficulty because of labor market imbalance. The primary reason is that the qualifications of degree-holding youths are incompatible with the various specialties in demand by contractors."

The situation is even worse in the private sector, prompting the National Council for Youth and the Future to undertake an initiative to retrain graduate youths whose specialties are not in demand by employers. On the other hand, other studies and statistics indicate that job seekers hold a variety of diplomas such as baccalaureates (49.6

percent), technical degrees (20.8 percent), and [professional] degrees (21.6 percent). Other figures indicate that diplomas no longer guarantee employment. Indeed, many holders of graduate degrees, including physicians, who account for 1.2 percent of all graduates, have trouble joining the work force. Meanwhile, 25,923 jobs, or 43.1 percent, are expected to be created this year and 26,514 more, at the rate of 43.1 percent, next year.

Al-Samrawi added that "the Council for Youth and the Future is constantly engaged in research and study of ways to bring graduate youths into the work force in accordance with the council's philosophy and objectives. And, of course, we are not an employment agency as is commonly perceived."

Not A Temporary Phenomenon

Yunis Mujahid, a journalist and a member of the youths auxiliary of al-Ittihad al-Ishtiraki, preferred to discuss graduate unemployment from a journalistic perspective.

He said: "I believe that we must put this phenomenon in its true perspective rather than deal with it as a temporary problem. Two years ago, I noticed that the issue of youth unemployment was being treated as a passing problem even though all evidence indicated that the future rate of unemployment would rise. The unemployment problem should not be dealt with at the level of the Council for Youth, which has no decision-making authority and no competence to advance curricula and educational programs or control the economy's current course. The council specializes in research and study and can not act in place of the state. Real solutions require comprehensive reevaluation of Morocco's economic structure that makes it difficult for investments to obtain loans and guarantees. Some of the laws that govern the private sector also need to be changed.

"The employment issue, therefore, should not be shunted aside to the council. The problem, among other things, is primarily structural and economic in nature."

An official of the Ministry of Labor told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the ministry has begun to institute an important network of placement agencies, which will begin operations shortly in several Moroccan cities and will have the function of placing unemployed graduates. The agencies are to supplant the committees of the Council for Youth and the Future that have recently been established throughout Morocco.

The official responded to a question about the number of unemployed university graduates placed by the ministry by citing the lack of accurate figures because the ministry places university graduates and simple [unskilled] workers alike since the law stipulates that all Moroccan citizens are equally entitled to register with employment bureaus. He added that official circles in Morocco are hopeful about the [new] agencies and expect them to play a significant role in placing diploma holders. "The agencies will employ modern techniques to gather data and identify demand, while the employment bureaus will focus on simple workers."

The agencies are being created at a time when unemployed graduates and diploma-holders are growing in number. Another census reveals that 75 percent of

unemployed youths have been looking for work for more than year, 55 percent for more than two years, and 38 percent for more than three years. Long-term unemployment is attributed to the large numbers of secondary-school diploma holders, who account for 55 percent of the youths who have been looking for work for longer than a year. Furthermore, there is no doubt that it is difficult to place these youths, largely because of their poor technical training and their lack of university education. Employers have little demand for baccalaureate holders because of poor practical experience.

Observers place unemployment at the doorstep of the educational system, which is considered effective but which, as some believe, has failed to coordinate with other strategic sectors in contributing to the country's development.

Said one university researcher: "One would be hard pressed to blame the educational sector alone for the growth of unemployment among university graduates, although one would admit that the sector has taken a relative backseat because of ineffective curricula and the laxity of faculty members in carrying out their mission to the fullest.

"It is justified, nevertheless, to deal with the problem of unemployed graduates in an integrated fashion that takes into account the type of curricula and the potential for empirically linking universities to their environments. We, in Morocco, advocate that universities should draw their material from their environments and should be responsive to societal needs in order to curtail unemployment that has come to haunt officials as well as graduates and their families. Universities must not stop at theoretical education, but should offer courses that could be applied in the field. It has been observed that certain sectors put more weight on experience and training than on theoretical and purely academic education. Future curricula must therefore be planned in a manner that would meet the demands of Moroccan society rather than turn Morocco into a field for the experiments of others. Curricula and primary courses offered in some of the countries that we consider advanced are being transferred to Moroccan society without regard to the peculiarities of that society and how it differs in material and human resources from those other societies whose curricula are being copied.

"It is imperative therefore to introduce courses that are primarily vocational in orientation. It is noted that a large percentage of unemployed diploma-holders are graduates of theoretical colleges [liberal arts] and that the unemployment rate drops among those with technical specialties. All of us should therefore seek successful solutions to the unemployment problem instead of trading accusations. We should focus on studying the core of the problem and on learning from the experiences of others in that regard."

The source added: "It has been observed Morocco has a propensity to add universities without considering the availability of qualified administrative and academic personnel capable of carrying out their missions to the fullest. It is also noted that we are utilizing less experienced professors whom we call assistant professors."

The above statement leads us to the following questions: What is the solution? Is it in opening placement agencies? Or is it in building more universities and changing curricula?

The answer is that before we do any of that we must nurture the individual in Morocco in the appropriate manner. This means building a framework before we build a university. We must devise courses and curricula rooted in Moroccan reality but with the benefit of the experience of others. We must create an educational system attuned to vocational demands. Our youths must plan their futures and select professions suitable to their talents and personal aptitudes instead of enrolling in certain colleges or institutes simply because their families want them to.

OMAN

Action Expected on Limiting Investments Abroad

93AE0046A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
2 Oct 92 p 10

[Text] The Omani Government is expected soon to take important actions to limit Omani investments abroad and direct them toward domestic projects. These actions also are aimed at attracting foreign investments to the Sultanate.

At present, government committees are studying ways to make important amendments to encourage and induce foreign and domestic capital to invest inside the country. Money invested in Oman would provide the capital needed to implement the ambitious fourth five-year plan, which the Sultanate started implementing last year and which will last until 1995. The annual rate of growth of the gross domestic product of the nonpetroleum productive sectors is expected to increase by more than 11 percent.

There are no accurate figures regarding the volume of Omani investments abroad. However, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT learned from influential sources that those investments were estimated at U.S. \$3 billion. The largest portion of these investments belongs to savings, employees retirement, and insurance funds. Presently, it is intended to put a limit on investing those funds abroad. It is expected that only 20 percent of those funds would be invested abroad, while 80 percent would be allocated for investment inside the country.

A report indicates that one of the savings funds with assets amounting to about 100 million Omani riyals [\$260 million], which is funded by several thousand Omanis, in addition to the government, has less than 10 percent of its assets invested inside the country, whereas 90 percent of the assets are invested abroad.

Various official financial organizations in the Sultanate tried to convince these funds to direct their investments either to the productive sectors or to the stock exchange market, but these attempts failed. The only solution would be to resort to legal action that would make it mandatory for those funds to contribute to the implementation of the national goals, which are embodied in the current five-year plan.

The goals and main targets of the five-year plan are geared toward broadening the investors' base. This can be done by

way of developing and supplying the Muscat money market and increasing the percentage of directed investments in productive projects. Along with that, the five-year plan goals could be achieved through the realization of a desirable annual rate of growth of gross local product averaging 6.3 percent in current prices. Economic sources ascertain that chances for remunerable investments are available inside the Sultanate, which offers profits that are not less, if not more, than profits accrued from investing abroad. Average profits on investments in Oman are among the highest in the world. Presently, there is a large demand for government development bonds from foreign banks and companies that want to make use of the 8.5 percent profits that these bonds offer. The Omani Government provides complete and unconditional protection for these bonds.

The trend of a number of funds to invest abroad is due of certain interests of a number of non-Omanis who are managing these funds. Presumably, these non-Omanis are not expected to make decisions that would be beneficial to the national economy. It is also not expected that these non-Omanis will invest inside the country through their own will. This situation makes it necessary for the government to intervene and pass a law to control the investment of Omani monies. These monies should be invested in funds to which the government contributes, so that they are inside the country. These sources again ascertained that projects within the five-year plan and prepared for implementation will cost about 1.319 billion Omani riyals, or \$3.429 billion. Both the government and the private sector should join hands to provide for the implementation of the plan's projects and achieve the plan's goals, in order to preserve the Sultanate's growth rate.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT learned that the Omani Development Council has endorsed a recommendation that calls for the necessary inducement of both the retirement and savings funds, as well as the companies to which the government contributes, to invest within the Omani economy. The council also recommended limiting investments abroad by these funds and companies. Among other recommendations is one that encourages investments from the Gulf region, the Arab world, and the rest of the world to come to Oman. These investments would be given the same incentives and advantages given to domestic investments having 100 percent Omani ownership. This means that both kinds of investments would enjoy the same incentives and tax relief granted by the state.

SUDAN

Al-Turabi's Policy Seen as Inconsistent

93AF0045A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
6 Oct 92 p 14

[Commentary by Muhammad al-Hasan Ahmad: "Al-Turabi's Front Contrary to Islamic Conference Organization Principles"]

[Text] Muhammad al-Hasan Ahmad writes from London about the Sudanese regime's position vis-a-vis international organizations and the Islamic Conference Organization itself. He says that the current Sudanese Government is against all world organizations in a way that invites confusion:

Mostly what causes confusion and perplexity, and even puzzlement, is that al-Turabi's government in Khartoum does something, and then contradicts it. If, for example, it adopted a specific political line a year or two ago, and then changed its position or backed away from that position completely or disavowed it in one way or another, some would believe that this regime was learning from its mistakes, or wandering erratically but with good intentions, or that it did not have a definite strategy with which to chart its course over the course of several years. All of that could be understood and justified. But, the front's government in Khartoum has had a definite public policy for nearly two years vis-a-vis the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO], and considers it "an organization of failed hopes," as al-Turabi himself put it. Moreover, he went even further in his excessiveness and arrogance toward it. He said that, basically, he had no hopes that could even be dashed. Al-Turabi said that it was an organization of governments isolated from the heartbeat of their peoples and that, since its inception, he has been its [contemporary]. Therefore, the Arab Islamic People's Conference of Khartoum, of which he has become the leader, is the alternative to that organization.

Then, later, the Conference of the Organization of Islamic States met in Senegal some months ago. This was a summit conference. Everyone knows that Sudan renewed its attack on the organization and reiterated al-Turabi's same views. Moreover, al-Turabi himself made other statements, just after the conclusion of the conference's session and the announcement of its closing communique, in which he ridiculed and laughed at that communique. He said that a conference that was embarrassed to mention the word "jihad," in the context of its final statement regarding Palestine, was an unsuccessful conference. Furthermore, he categorically condemned the Arab nations for accepting the idea of entering into negotiations with Israel.

Everything we have cited happened this year, only a few months ago. The reason the regime expressed such excessive concern was that this organization for which, basically, it had no hope, had not provided every opportunity to hold a meeting of the Islamic nations' foreign ministers in Khartoum. But, more than that, the regime thinks that not holding this conference of foreign ministers in Khartoum is a danger to Muslim unity. A statement issued by the Khartoum government alleges that not holding the meeting is tantamount to a plot that was hatched by the ICO's secretariat and certain Arab nations. Therefore, Sudan is withdrawing from the secretariat and holds it responsible.

The regime accused the ICO of splitting the ranks of Muslims and, then, suspended its membership in the ICO...true. Is there any symmetry in the front's characterization of the ICO, in terms of its being a useless organization, that it is an organization of governments, while the front strives for a people's organization? They have created such an organization, and al-Turabi has become its leader.

Was this done merely because the ICO did not hold a meeting of its foreign ministers in Khartoum? It is an organization that, basically, the rulers in Khartoum see as valueless!

It is, in fact, a perplexing question. Did the regime, in fact, feel the pressure of its external and internal isolation and want this meeting of foreign ministers of all the Islamic nations held in Khartoum merely to derive some legitimacy and to offset the isolation within Sudan? Or, did it, in fact, want to break out of its foreign isolation, even if only through a door of false consumer investment, calculating that every country of the Islamic world would meet under the sponsorship and patronage of its rule? Or, again, was it planning some way to create a diversion within itself, even if imaginary, in order to signal an end to this organization, so that the legitimate legacy would go to the People's Islamic Conference, founded in Khartoum under the leadership of al-Turabi?

No matter what the fantasies are, logic is incapable of understanding this debacle for the simple reason that the location of the conference of Islamic nations' foreign ministers was switched from Khartoum to the halls of the United Nations in New York. This gives these Islamic nations an opportunity to hold a meeting with the UN General Assembly. That step, by all standards, is a good opportunity, because it provides the Islamic nations with the support that their people have every right to, and provides time for other fruitful work in other areas. However, it takes away from Sudan the primary support that the people of Sudan deserve, if that regime felt any compassion for them at all.

Yet, what occurred was the complete reverse of that. The Sudanese regime raised a rumpus, attacking brotherly and friendly Arab and African nations. It heaped untold abuse on the ICO Secretariat General and, then, announced its withdrawal from the Secretariat General. It is impossible that this show of anger was merely to divert attention from the Khartoum meeting for procedural reasons. There must be political reasons behind it!

Perhaps, the pressing question is, how can a likely answer be found concerning the best possibility with regard to the meaning of the front's attack on the ICO on the one hand, and its adherence to holding its expected meetings in Khartoum? In general, they make it difficult. Their positions rely on a double standard. Of course, all of their positions have no connection with Islam. Despite that, we have come to believe that they, basically and fundamentally, were not anxious to hold the conference in Khartoum because it would have disturbed their plans, which were drawn up previously and were dependent on the People's Conference, of which al-Turabi has become the leader. Therefore, not holding the conference in Khartoum was what they wanted and, consequently, they took the opportunity to attack that, calculating that that would bring support, in one way or another, to the People's Conference, which was founded, basically, as an antidote to the ICO. It also provided an opportunity to continue the attack on the ICO, or rather, to withdraw from it, as was subsequently done. One might believe that raising the ardor of some Sudanese was done for various reasons, perhaps including persuading the Sudanese people concerning the alternative conference!

Whatever the reason, the final upshot is that the regime is stumbling and has completely lost its balance. Its effort to mess up the organization of Islamic countries has failed, and its attempt to sell the organization of the Khartoum

People's Arab Islamic Conference to the Islamic world, as an alternative to the ICO, has had no success worth mentioning. Therefore, the regime's launching of a deliberate attack against the ICO, merely because a meeting scheduled to be held in Khartoum was canceled, is no more than an excuse to breach the unanimity of the Islamic nations and damage their trust in the ICO, which has been, and still is, concerned about the unity of Muslims.

In any event, one ought not think that the position of al-Turabi's front is unusual. All of its positions clash with its Arab brothers. Yesterday, Sudan's representative to the meetings of Arab information ministers stood against the Arab consensus with regard to supporting the United Arab Emirates to regain its rights usurped by Iran vis-a-vis the islands of Abu Musa and Tunb al-Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra. Also on the same day, in an interview conducted by the magazine AL-MAJALLAH and published in its latest issue, the Tunisian foreign minister revealed that Sudan has refused to pay its share of the Arab League fees owed to the League in Tunis. Furthermore, many have exposed the Sudanese regime's involvement in attempts to violate the security of Tunisia and other Arab nations. Thus, it is apparent that their view of the ICO and their attack on it are not exceptions to their positions vis-a-vis the rest of the Arab organizations, as well as international organizations. Did they not harshly attack the OAU Secretariat shortly before the holding of the African summit conference, accusing it of being in collusion with imperialist forces merely because it submitted a proposal to create an OAU military force to break up armed clashes among the African states? Then, they tried to bury the idea. Have they stopped attacking the humanitarian organizations that look after human rights, or try to bring relief to the people of Sudan?

The fact is that they are against all international organizations in such a way as to invoke confusion. They use dramatic methods, using the drama of tightrope walking to attack the ICO. It would be clever to be able to forecast the title of the next drama!

Al-Turabi Said To Fund Training Camps

93AF0079C Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI
in Arabic 9 Oct 92 p 15

[Unattributed report: "Sudanese Camps for Training Opposition in Uganda and Kenya Led by 'Ali al-Haj; Part of Plan to Achieve al-Turabi's Islamic Empire"]

[Text] The African countries neighboring Sudan have begun to watch the al-Bashir-al-Turabi Government closely, to make out its actual intentions to intervene in the affairs of Kenya and Uganda specifically. These countries have recently noticed an intensifying of the Islamic Front's activities in the two countries, and obtained information accusing al-Turabi of working to open a new front in the south, having begun in North Africa, then east Africa, in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Eritrea, in addition to some countries of the eastern flank of the Arab world, to realize his dream of becoming supreme imam of a fundamentalist Islamic empire.

In this context, AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI has learned that Dr. 'Ali al-Haj, the official spokesman of the delegation at the peace talks on the southern Sudan, has for some time

been undertaking an extra mission: looking after the armed opposition against neighboring countries, specifically Kenya and Uganda, and establishing training camps in one Equatoria city, which al-Haj supervises, funds and arms for use against these countries, which Sudan accuses of helping Garang in the south.

At the same time, Dr. al-Haj continues to speak publicly in the name of peace, while trying, in what he says and does privately, to stir up trouble. This was clear during his recent participation in the government's name, in the Abuja negotiations, when he spoke at a celebration organized by the Popular Defense Forces in Dongola, confirming that the south is Islamic territory, and that "there is no solution except the one we are following now." He added, "We went to Abuja with clear instructions not to abandon the Shariah [Islamic law], the federal system, the unity of Sudan, the revolutionary political system."

The remarks of the official spokesman of the delegation to the peace talks in Abuja are viewed as an irrefutable sign of the intentions of the Islamic Front regime, of its lack of desire to achieve peace in the south, and a confirmation that the war that al-Turabi's Front has begun to prepare will continue there, and spread to countries neighboring Sudan.

Mirghani Reportedly Seeks Arms for Rebels

93AF0079B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
27 Sep 92 p 4

["Khartoum Accuses al-Mirghani of Buying American Arms for Garang," reported by Mu'awiyah Yasin in London and 'Umar Muhammad al-Hasan in Khartoum]

[Text] The Sudanese Government has accused an opposition leader of carrying out a plan to purchase arms for the Popular Army for the Liberation of Sudan led by Colonel John Garang, while another of its foes has criticized it before the annual conference of the British Lawyers Federation, and criticized its dissolution of the Sudanese Lawyers Syndicate, and what it called "ignoring government prisons and setting aside houses to hold political detainees and torture them."

An official in Sudan's Presidential Palace told AL-HAYAH that Khartoum had information that Mr. Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani, leader of the Khatmiyah sect [and] President of Democratic Federalist [Ittihad Dimuqrati] Party, who has been visiting the United States for more than two weeks, is engaging in contacts to buy arms for the Popular Army, which is fighting government troops in the south of the country.

Mirghani had contacts with the American government in Washington, which his supporters said dealt with studying conditions in Sudan in general, and in the south particularly. They refused, however, to comment on the Sudanese Government's charges.

The Sudanese official in Khartoum said that al-Mirghani had visited West African countries before heading to the United States to arrange ways of transporting arms from there to the Popular Army, which is positioned near the

border with Uganda. He added that the Sudanese Government had officially warned Kenya and Uganda of the consequences of cooperating with Mirghani in this regard."

In London, lawyer Faruq Abu 'Isa, a member of the Supreme Committee for Inter-Party and Syndicate Coordination in the Alliance of the Sudanese Opposition, addressed the opening session of the annual conference of the British Lawyers Federation, and accused the regime of the National Salvation Revolution of destroying judiciary and the legal profession. He said that the Sudanese judiciary had become a tool of the executive authority.

Abu 'Isa, who serves at the same time as Secretary-General of the Federation of Arab Lawyers, indicated that the Sudanese regime had dissolved the Sudanese Lawyers Syndicate, which was subject to democratic election since its founding in 1924. He said it had enjoyed special status, "as its code made it part of the judicial system itself."

He mentioned in his speech to the British lawyers that the regime of Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir had finished destroying party pluralism "and started one party there, the National Islamic Front," which is led by Dr. Hasan al-Turabi.

He said that the regime was still violating human rights, "to the point where it ignores state prisons and sets aside houses for torture teams to carry out the most vicious kinds of torture on political prisoners and prisoners of conscience."

Abu 'Isa asked the British lawyers for solidarity with Sudan's lawyers and judges, and to put pressure on the Sudanese regime to reinstate the independence of the judicial system. He said that the annual conference of the International Federation of Lawyers, held in Cannes, France, last week, refused permission for lawyers 'Ali al-Nasri and Mu'tasim 'Ali al-Tum to attend its sessions, as they did not represent the committee elected by the Sudanese Lawyers Syndicate.

He indicated that the recent conference criticized, in its closing resolutions, human rights violations in Sudan and what was happening to the Lawyers Syndicate there.

In addition, Abu al-Qasim Muhammad Ibrahim, former First Deputy to the President, Secretary-General of the ruling party in the time of former President Ja'far Numayri, has told AL-HAYAH that he acknowledges his cooperation with Numayri in setting off the revolution of May 1969, "though I have not joined the political organization Numayri heads to decide to fire me or join a membership that does not exist anyway."

Ibrahim said that he was surprised by Numayri's decision to remove him from the organization called the Alliance of the People's Working Forces and explained that he had joined the ranks of the National Salvation organization, because he believes in mass action.

He added that he did not acknowledge any organization or political party pursuing its political action outside Sudan, "because Sudan's problems are here on its soil, and solutions will not come from abroad."

DUP Leader Al-Mirghani Interviewed

93AF0115A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
24 Oct 92 p 5

[Article by Muhammad al-Hasan Ahmad in London: "All Sudan Paying the Price for Regime's Mistakes; Government's Religious Mania Threatens to Fragment Country"]

[Text] Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani, leader of the Sudanese Democratic Union Party, has spoken to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT about the most important current events on the Sudanese scene, from the chances of the division of southern Sudan to U.S. Congressional resolutions, the likelihood of Security Council intervention, the repercussions of the dissolution of the Khatmiyah [Order] group that he led, the view of the Democratic Union Party, which he leads in the reconciliation proposed by al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, and the regime's allegations that he—al-Mirghani—has been in contact with the regime with the aim of reconciliation in return for certain demands, as well as its charges that he has been behind arms purchases for Garang's movement.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What is your opinion of the U.S. Congress's condemnation of the Sudanese Government and the demand the United States is expected to make of the Security Council, asking it to consider taking measures against Sudan?

[Al-Mirghani] Perhaps you remember that during my private visit to the United States a few weeks ago, some officials in the Front government, making up lies and circulating them, as is their habit, said that I had gone to incite the United States against the regime and to buy arms for Garang's movements. Of course any reasonable person, informed of the course of political events, would simply ridicule those claims. God willed that the lie they concocted about us—saying that we incited the United States to intervene in Sudan—was actually fact, but about them, not anyone else; evil scorn befalls only its own people. It was their bad luck that *they* were the ones who incited the United States, with their brutal actions against the USAID relief workers, executing one or two of them, on top of their contempt for the honor of the Sudanese and their abuse of human rights.

There is no doubt that this regime, with all its loathsome behavior, sought to create discord among the people of Sudan in general and between Muslims specifically, even though the people of Sudan have been known, throughout their history, for their tolerance, cooperation, and friendliness. The signs of this policy of discord are reflected in the regime's move to dissolve the Islamic proselytizing groups and its attempt to force a half million people to emigrate from the capital to the southern district and the west of Sudan. How can the world possibly interpret this behavior except as ethnic cleansing, or ethnic discrimination? All of these people possess the right of citizenship and to live anywhere in Sudan. The government's behavior might have been palatable had it moved these people to productive areas, where labor is needed, but the people who wanted to move them did not want to please them. Therefore the world had the right to condemn those actions of the regime. We, too, condemn the regime and

have nothing to do with this discord it is plotting, which, without the slightest doubt, threatens the unity of Sudan, nation and people alike.

These blatant abuses of Sudanese human rights consisted of what I mentioned above, in addition to the arbitrary cutting of civil services, mass purges in the ranks of the Armed Forces and regular forces, arrests, imprisonment, and torture in nightmarish chambers and executions without trial. The right to work is no longer available except to members of al-Turabi's Front, in addition to its monopoly on economic and commercial activity.

So the position of the United States is justified. If the regime is not watched and the dangers of the route it is taking are not watched, the Security Council will intervene, bringing with it the expected punishments. In the end, it is Sudan that will pay the price for all of these grave errors the Islamic Front regime has committed and is still committing, with no thought for the fate of the country.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What do you think of the signs that indicate the likelihood that the division of southern Sudan from the north is no longer expected but has become a fact—that the whole question is a question of time more than one of self-determination?

[Al-Mirghani] We are, absolutely, against the fragmenting of the unity of Sudan, and have sought to do everything possible to solve Sudan's complex problems. We reached an accord with Colonel Garang. The war was about to come to an end within a few days of July 1989, but the Front plotted against peace and democracy with the coup it mounted on June 30, claiming that it had protected it with what it called the surrender accord. Then it deployed all the Sudan's resources, as little as they were, to escalate the war in the south and increase its scale by establishing the Popular Defense Forces—jihad forces, as they call them—so that the war would enter a religious dimension, leaving behind the nature of its origin, abandoning the study of the problems it had caused. The Front almost succeeded in this transformation, but for its clear mistreatment of Muslims—torturing them and mistreating them the same way it mistreated the Christians. Everyone knows that the regime has recently attempted to dissolve the Khatamiyah group, which is a group that directs a purely religious effort for the Khamatmiyah religious brotherhood that spread Islam throughout Sudan and outside it for nearly two centuries. This is a fact that merits consideration from both our Muslim and non-Muslim brothers.

For this reason the action of this minority that claims Islam and Arabism, and that holds power, should not be blamed on Arabism at all or on Islam, despite the tolerance, friendliness, and solidarity for which the Sudanese people have been known for centuries. We should not help or fall into its trap, aimed at cutting off southern Sudan from the North, with the illusion of establishing a religious state in the North to satisfy some delusion or plans based on fanaticism that fracture the unity of Sudan.

Sudan's constant problem is how to preserve its unity, which in itself is not a religious problem. Islam was not part of the problem at any time. Over the course of centuries, Islam has advanced and never retreated until they came on to the political scene. Now that they have usurped power in the name of Islam, the future of Islam is

threatened in Sudan, and the unity of Sudan is threatened, too. We call very clearly and frankly for the international community to support the unity of Sudan and to help the Sudanese people to help safeguard its unity, bring peace, restore democracy, and maintain human rights for the Sudanese people.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How do you now assess conditions in the Armed Forces, especially with rumors that they are being dispersed in scattered and isolated areas in southern Sudan—and what is said of you, specifically, about your support of Garang?

[Al-Mirghani] It is a fact that the Armed Forces' conditions in at present are deplorable, and they are in fact scattered. But what is really saddening is that those who have been killed have left no trace and are not mentioned. The government does not even notify their families or relatives or publish their obituaries. At the same time, it has displayed valor, heroism, and martyrdom in defense of the populace, with the aim of continuing the inflame the clamor of the religious war, on one hand, and reducing the importance of the Armed Forces on the other hand, in preparation for the Popular Defense Forces to take their place.

What is needed is for the Armed Forces to take action to restore their nationalism and honor and to expose that group [the regime], which claims falsely that it rules in its name, while it actually rules in the name of a narrow front, al-Turabi's Front, which represents only a minority. It has borrowed the reputation and history of the Armed Forces, from all its positions and its stature among the great mass of the Sudanese people.

Some people may imagine I am inciting the Armed Forces to rise up against the brittle regime ruling in their name. But first of all, I would like to say that the current regime has always feared, since its coup against democracy, the stature we enjoy among all branches of the Armed Forces, not because of tribal, religious, or political affiliations, but because of the support offered to the national military establishment whereby I invested my foreign relations and stature with fellow Arab countries and the bridge that I have built with no ruse or plot in mind, nor using my stature for any other purpose than serving our country, Sudan.

The government knows this stature we enjoy, thanks to God's grace, within the nation's military establishment. It wants to make up and repeat stories and claims that I am always trying, with the Arabs, the Americans, and the West, to supply Garang's movement with arms, in addition to other lies that use allegations and delusions to cause a break between us and the Armed Forces—for whom I have the highest regard.

Perhaps the only comfort is that this weak regime will continue to gasp for breath until it falls, repeating these deceptive slogans shamelessly dreamed up by the agencies of al-Turabi's Front. None of them will do it any good, or act as a substitute for God, or help the regime escape the judgement of the Sudanese people.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What about what some of the Front's people in the regime say, that your contact with them did not end because of conciliation, that what you

were demanding was a diplomatic passport, the return of al-Mirghani Garden, and a position for your brother, who was head of state in the time of democracy?

[Al-Mirghani] Would any rational person believe that we have connections with this regime, that we would come to understandings and deal with it, when all it ever wants to do is harm and insult us, and confiscate our properties that were passed on from grandfather to father? It pours out all its hostility on the Democratic Union Party, some of whose leaders are still besieged by trumped-up charges and who withstand the cruelest kinds of torture in the torture chambers. All this regime wants to do is the opposite of our political directions inside and outside of the country. I am amazed that they would say what you mentioned in your question—that is a stroke of contempt and foolishness that does not deserve a reply.

These are hoaxes, which no rational person believes and which I therefore deny categorically, but I should confirm that all we are demanding is the return of pluralistic democracy, peace, respect for human rights, the safeguarding of the unity of the Sudan, and the restoration of the bridges this regime has burned with Sudan's brothers and friends. We have no personal demands to add to these public, national demands.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] It is a known fact that al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has produced what he called a national reconciliation plan. Opinions on it vary. Some say the National Grouping was not consulted. Some say that it is incompatible with the charters enacted by the Grouping, and some accuse al-Sadiq of having sought reconciliation with the regime. What is your opinion of this initiative?

[Al-Mirghani] Our position toward this regime is clear and unswerving. The al-Ummah Party is with us, in the same trench, in the Democratic National Grouping. We in the Democratic Union Party, as well as in the al-Ummah Party, have not seen issues in a narrow partisan way. So al-Sadiq's initiative asks the regime, first of all, for its opinion of it. It is aimed, principally, at the regime. So far it has still not given its opinion. Therefore we do not take a position or make predictions about useless conflicts, lest the regime benefit from the silence it maintains, while we slide into useless chaos.

However that may be, does this regime have any group effective in the sense that it possesses the awareness, reason, and national sense—apart from a sense of partisanship and a fear of the consequences beyond megalomania—to enable them to appreciate, or retreat from, idle talk and the dangers Sudan faces on every side? That is the question.

Secret Deal With Rebel Faction Feared

93AF0079A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
11 Oct 92 p 4

["Garang Accuses Mutineers and Khartoum of Signing Secret Hague Accord," reported by Nizar Daw al-Na'im in London]

[Text] Colonel John Garang's wing of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Sudan confirmed yesterday that the Sudanese Government and the secessionist al-Nasir wing recently signed a secret accord in The Hague to

coordinate a military campaign against the positions Garang controls in southern Sudan.

The leader of the al-Nasir wing, however, Dr. Lam Akul, told AL-HAYAH that Garang's comment about the new accord serves "domestic propaganda purposes and represents an attempt to divert those who remain with him from talking about the real problems inside the movement," and "We deny having met with any government officials anywhere in Europe."

Garang's representative in the United Kingdom, Steven Bak, told AL-HAYAH yesterday, Saturday, that the accord was signed in The Hague by Dr. Lam Akul, who led a delegation including John Lock and Ta'ban Deng, two members of the executive leadership of the al-Nasir wing, and Sudanese Minister Dr. 'Ali al-Haj, responsible for North-South relations. He explained that the agreement was signed in the last month.

He added that the accord centered chiefly on military cooperation between the two sides to foil the campaign being readied by his movement to seize the city of Juba, the capital of the south. He explained that the whole plan, whose broad lines had been previously set out, also included the commissioning of the vice-president of the movement, William Nun, who recently announced that he was taking over the leadership of the movement, to assassinate Garang, then attend the Hague meeting "to confirm the surrender of the movement to the Islamic National Front Government."

He confirmed that the two sides had agreed on the following. First, that al-Nasir wing would withdraw its call for a referendum on self-determination in southern Sudan, and accept a government-proposed federal formula.

Second, that the two sides would work to reduce the significance of the Nigerian-sponsored peace talks and derail the initiative of Nigerian President Ibrahim Babangida.

Third, to sign a cease-fire accord in the Upper Nile Province (controlled by the al-Nasir wing).

Fourth, that the al-Nasir wing send forces to expel Garang's forces from the Eastern Equatoria Province (areas they currently occupy) to obstruct the movement's plans to seize Juba, one of the largest cities in southern Sudan.

Akul considered talk of the new accord to be "pure fantasy. Garang has previously published the same points, though then it was the Frankfurt Accord; later it came out that that was untrue. Now he wants to dilute the issue of the conflict within his wing and divert public opinion from his problem."

He emphasized his wing's consent to attend the peace talks in Abuja at the end of this month, "as long as they are not postponed by the conflict within Garang's wing." He added that his movement wanted all the powers that had a military presence to attend the talks: "it is up to Garang to solve the problem of who represents his wing, him or William Bani." He explained that the movement of his forces toward the equatorial region "was in response to Bani's invitation, and has nothing to do with the supposed Juba operation that failed a long time back."

Dr. 'Ali al-Haj, who is currently on a European and African tour, told AL-HAYAH that he has not visited Holland anyway, and has not signed any agreements with Akul. He mentioned that "circumstances had shown the importance of the Frankfort Accord" signed with Akul last year in the next [sic] round of the peace talks.

Labor Minister Discusses New Approach Application

93AF0041A Khartoum AL-INQADH AL-WATANI
in Arabic 5 Sep 92 p 7

[Interview with Major General Dominic Kassiano, member of the Revolution Command Council and labor minister, by Muzamil 'Abd-al-Ghaffar in Khartoum; date not given]

[Text] Major General Dominic Kassiano, member of the Revolution Command Council and labor minister, spoke to AL-INQADH AL-WATANI about a number of important issues. He ascertained that the revolution would continue working for the achievement of peace. He also explained the details of the ministry's program in light of the 10-year national plan. These programs include revising labor legislation, supervising workers protection procedures, paying rural areas special attention, and establishing more labor offices.

In the following interview, Kassiano indicated that all Sudanese are requested to gather around the revolution in order to achieve the goals of the "comprehensive rescue."

['Abd-al-Ghaffar] It is known that the country is currently heading toward implementing a comprehensive national strategic program. Therefore, all ministries and administrations should be prepared to go along the indicated lines. What are the ministry's plans in light of this strategy?

[Kassiano] In light of the comprehensive national strategy, the Labor Ministry has created a few work projects. The first of these projects is connected with legislation and labor relations.... With regard to worker protection, the ministry will revise all labor legislation in order to prepare new legislation that will balance workers rights and duties, as well as promote the positive sides of labor relations. The foremost of these procedures will be a periodic revision of minimum wages, which will be done in coordination with the Higher Council for Wages. Other projects include the following: [passage omitted]

- The provision and organization of job opportunities by way of revitalizing all economic activities and supporting small businesses in the areas of manufacturing, agriculture, crafts, and cooperatives.
- Giving proper attention to the larger sector of the population, which is the rural population. This would be done through providing rural areas with economic growth opportunities, basic needs, job opportunities, and equitable income distribution. To meet those ends, the ministry is implementing a number of condensed work programs. It is planned that those work programs would be repeated in those regions that are in need of them. This would be done in cooperation with the UN Development Program and the International Labor Office.

These programs aim mainly at achieving development by way of developing rural infrastructure, creating job opportunities, and reducing rural-urban migration.

- Promoting vocational and professional training. This kind of training is effective to provide well-trained workers, whether for organized work or for self-employment. This training should also do away with unemployment.
- Supporting and developing research in the area of labor force planning. In this area of research, a few important issues could be identified.

These are:

- Labor migration from rural to urban areas.
- Productive utilization of redundant labor.
- Training of school dropouts.
- Brain drain, the emigration of the more skilled workers abroad, and the problem of returning workers.

['Abd-al-Ghaffar] Federal rule is one of the political and administrative accomplishments of the National Rescue Revolution. This feature is related to the political philosophy of the country. What are the ministry's plans with regard to implementing federal rule?

[Kassiano] The ministry's plan will be implemented by way of programs that will be drawn for the separate states and provinces. A network of administrative offices will implement these programs in states, provinces, and local administrative councils. We plan to have a labor office in each province and also provide work administration services as soon as possible to citizens. Presently we have 32 offices in the different states and provinces.

['Abd-al-Ghaffar] Through everyday life, it became evident to us that there was a shortage of labor affairs inspection of industrial, commercial, and service institutions. The small number of labor courts was also evident.

[Kassiano] Accurate data needs to be collected from the different states and branch labor offices regarding this matter in order to have a clear picture of what has been already achieved, the shortages, and the reasons for them. [passage omitted]

['Abd-al-Ghaffar] How can the ministry depict the coordination between the government and the states within the framework of the federal rule?

[Kassiano] Within the framework of federal rule, I expect that the ministry will be responsible for the planning, coordinating, training, and organizing of the ministry's programs, at all levels. On the other hand, all issues related to the application of labor laws and decrees will be the responsibility of the states through their labor offices. We are now planning to establish at least one labor office in each province. However, some provinces already have, or need to have, more than one office because they have a lot of economic activities.

['Abd-al-Ghaffar] It is a fact that the Labor Ministry can play a role with regard to the labor-management relationship. How do you envisage developing this relationship in order to promote labor relations?

[Kassiano] The Labor Ministry's plan as described above could only be implemented through the ministry's cooperation with workers organizations, employers, and workers. [passage omitted]

[Abd-al-Ghaffar] You mentioned that the building of Sudan requires the unification of all of its peoples' efforts, which are motivated by knowledge and science. What is your opinion regarding the issue of workers' culture?

[Kassiano] The workers' culture law should be examined so that it can achieve the goals that are appropriate within the Sudanese identity and aspirations.

- Workers' cultural programs should be rewritten in order to accommodate new directives aimed at uniting the Sudanese people. [passage omitted]
- The workers' cultural program should be broadened so that it will include cultural programs for workers based on the definition of culture approved at the syndicate dialogue conference, i.e., to provide cultural programs for workers, civil servants, and professionals.
- The workers' cultural apparatus should be developed, both at the central and state levels, in order to serve the goals of workers' cultural programs.
- Syndicate organizations should be encouraged to take part in comprehensive illiteracy programs for the sectors for which they are responsible, in particular, and for the whole country, in general.

[Abd-al-Ghaffar] The revolution has taken steps forward in the last three years. A great deal has already been achieved, but much still remains to be achieved. How do you view what has been achieved and what has not, within the framework of "salvation"?

[Kassiano] The Salvation Revolution had as its goal the correction of certain conditions that prevailed in the country and the achievement of well-defined goals. Foremost among those goals was the alleviation of people's suffering and the accomplishment of the country's overall development. [passage omitted]

The Salvation Revolution has brought about political stability and ended the state's division and disintegration, which was caused by the era of partisanship. Therefore, the revolution is now taking serious steps toward building a new Sudan, which is autonomous. I therefore appeal to all Sudanese, from the North and the South, to fully understand the civilization, values, and political and economic construction that Sudan is looking forward to achieving in the framework of the Salvation Revolution. [passage omitted]

[Abd-al-Ghaffar] There is no doubt that the revolution had peace as its major goal since its outset. The revolution was instigated to end the problem of the South. It therefore convened the first Comprehensive Peace Conference, which had an agenda that was convincing to everybody, both inside and outside of Sudan. The revolution is still heading toward that goal with steady steps and disclosed intentions. In light of this situation, what is the government's stand with regard to the second round of negotiations?

[Kassiano] Since the onset of the revolution, it has had well-defined goals and themes, which were disclosed both inside Sudan and outside of it. The revolution's goal was to bring about peace.

As the revolution is striding along the years, it still has faith in the peace principle as the best way to end the fighting. The revolution is still steadfast in its stand of working for a comprehensive and fair peace. In light of that, the revolutionary government is presently ready to enter the second round of peace negotiations with the belief that those negotiations should succeed so that an end to the fighting can be brought about and the reconstruction of the South can start.

Transitional Council Member Interviewed

93AF0001A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
26 Sep 92 p 5

[Interview with Mahjub 'Urwah, member of the transitional National Assembly, by Imam Muhammad Imam in London; date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] Mr. Mahjub 'Urwah is a member of the transitional National Assembly and publisher of the newspaper AL-SUDANI, which, along with other party and independent newspapers, was suspended when the National Salvation revolution took place on 30 June 1989. AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT conducted the following interview with him:

[Imam] There are speculations among political commentators on Sudanese affairs about the prospects of a national reconciliation among the various Sudanese political powers? This reconciliation would be conducted in a framework of new understandings and formats. To what extent is this an accurate trend?

['Urwah] This perception of the necessity of national reconciliation among the National Salvation government and the other Sudanese political factions is the Sudanese people's hope. The Sudanese see that the salvation regime has had various achievements. The regime, however, needs to normalize its relationship with all of the opposition factions and with other political and social factions, as well. This should be done so that the regime can avoid resorting to the same actions that other regimes, whether military dictatorships or false liberal democracies, have resorted to before. [passage omitted]

I think that Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir's appeal, which he directed to all of the opposition factions, even to those who were armed, conveyed this reconciliatory message. Therefore, the opposition must consider this appeal seriously, so that better conditions for all and a better future for Sudan can be realized.

The South and the Search for a Solution

[Imam] The problem of southern Sudan has been at the core of all of the problems that have led to the delay of the development process in Sudan since independence. Do you think that an urgent and successful solution to this problem and to ending the war is imperative?

['Urwah] Although the South's problem has become more serious lately, it was and will continue to be both a problem of a lack of confidence and of foreign interference. All

Sudanese have suffered from the war, but our brethren in the South have been the hardest hit because the war is on their land and among their children. However, let me assert that we are all Sudanese.

In the past, the leaders of the rebellion, among them Lieutenant General Joseph Lagu, had insight and wisdom. Besides, the government's negotiations played a positive role that enabled the country to enjoy peace for more than 10 years. Now, the members of the negotiating parties could have their names preserved as distinguished and benevolent sons of Sudan if they were to seize the opportunity of the coming meeting in Abuja and reach a reasonable solution. This solution, endorsed by all, would preserve the nation's integrity and honor and preserve for the lives, money, and wealth of the Sudanese. [passage omitted]

Publishing Independent Newspapers

[Imam] There was an understanding that a law would be issued that authorizes the publication of independent newspapers that are owned by institutions, not by individuals, regardless of these individuals' intellectual and political affiliation. But until now, this law has not been passed. What are the reasons for this delay?

[Urwah] When Lieutenant General al-Bashir assumed power, he declared that a free press would be allowed within two months. The Political System Convention and the Communication Convention, which had been authorized by the Revolution Command Council, had both approved resolutions and recommendations that called for a free press. In spite of that, freedom of the press has not yet been granted. The independent newspapers, which would be published within the framework of legal and political guarantees and behavioral values, would be operating under the umbrella of the press and printing law, which controls journalism. Under this law, independent newspapers that are owned by institutions and not by individuals, would be allowed to be published. All of these procedures would rationalize the press and enable it to play a larger role in confidence building and molding people's thinking. Subsequently, a positive political environment would be established; a political system would evolve, and a strong base for stability would be reinstated. [passage omitted]

Furious Arguments in the Sudanese Parliament

[Imam] The transitional National Assembly's contribution to supervisory and legislative issues is weak. As you are a member of this assembly, what are the causes for this weak contribution, whether it be supervisory or legislative?

[Urwah] The transitional National Assembly's supervisory role during the passing period has not been weak. In fact, members of the assembly enjoyed full freedom, and they directed many questions to, and demanded data from, ministers. Many furious arguments took place between the members and the ministers inside the assembly. I believe that the assembly's future work will be even greater and more fruitful.

On the other hand, the assembly's contribution to legislative affairs has been small and modest. The reason for that may be because the period was short, there were many questions and data demands, and the general budget, the

peace plan, and a comprehensive national strategy had to be discussed, as well. In addition, the council's permanent committees have been established only recently.

Generally speaking, there is a conviction that the transitional National Assembly should play the role assigned to it completely and effectively. It is therefore important to look forward to the coming legislative sessions. The assembly's members will have to prove that they are worthy of confidence to make the legislature a strong one and not an imaginary one.

Can the Islamic Front Benefit from the Leftist Experience?

[Imam] Since independence, political parties and intellectuals have supported all military coups. In your opinion, what is the future of the relationship between the National Salvation revolution and the Islamic Front?

[Urwah] All previous radical changes in Sudan were expressions of political and intellectual realities. [passage omitted]

Those advocating Islam in Sudan are trying to surpass the Islamic Front's logic with a logic of a comprehensive Islamic renaissance. A comprehensive Islamic renaissance would be an alternative to a narrow Islamic party. If the advocates of Islam did just that, they would meet with success and spare the country many conflicts. If, on the other hand, they insisted on following a partisan logic, the future would be grim, especially because the National Salvation revolution could not sustain narrow partisanism. All Sudanese are looking forward to a more widespread dialogue and contribution and to an Islamic scenario that can accommodate all. Such a scenario should be open and not rigid, so that it can accommodate all Sudanese nationals, from both north and south, as well as Muslims, Christians, and atheists alike. If this is achieved, there will be a new Sudan for the world to look onto, and to enter into the 21st century.

Halayib and the Egyptian-Sudanese Conflict

[Imam] Do you think that the conflict between Egypt and Sudan about Halayib is only a pretext, so that Egyptians and Sudanese can discuss other issues?

[Urwah] Yes, I believe so. The Halayib conflict only emerges when relations between the two countries are not friendly. This can be proved by the fact that the Halayib issue had been frozen for more than 30 years.

Generally speaking, what should be presented for discussion and agreement are the big issues of mutual interest to both countries and the means of exploiting the two nations' resources and wealth for the benefit of the two peoples of the Nile. Besides, there should be consensus to solve brotherly differences in a way that is acceptable to both sides. In fact, the danger that arises from the Israeli enemy and Israel's plans in the region is much graver than that arising from an Arab brother.

Getting Rid of Arab Conflicts

[Imam] In your opinion, how can the Arab countries get rid of the conflicts among themselves that were created by the Gulf war? How can normal relations between Sudan and the Gulf states be resumed?

['Urwah] Present Arab differences are the same differences that prevailed among Arab states before the June 1967 war. These differences were mainly related to the ideological struggle between the different Arab countries, which were at that time siding with either the communist or the capitalist camp.

I think that the only solution to the present crisis is for the Arab leaders and Arab peoples to return to the same stand they had after the 1967 war. This could be achieved through mutual respect and by establishing an Arab consensus that would transcend Gulf war injuries, regardless of the pain that they may have caused.

Funds To Help Refugees Allocated

93AF0041B Khartoum AL-INQADH AL-WATANI
in Arabic 10 Sep 92 p 6

[Text] Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, deputy prime minister and vice president of the Revolution Command Council, praised the inhabitants of the Eastern Province for their considerable role in welcoming and providing help to the Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees, as well as sharing their food with those refugees during the past years. He mentioned that Sudan had gained great experience in helping refugees and in issues associated with refugees.

Salih addressed the opening session of the Refugee Conference held in the city of Ash-Shuwak yesterday morning. He confirmed Sudan's willingness to support the Refugee Agency's plans and programs, which are aimed at stabilizing the refugee situation. He also mentioned that there was no longer any reason for the refugee situation to continue.

Al-Zubayr confirmed that the Interior Ministry had adopted the recommendations of the Refugee Conference. He said that Sudan has attempted to solve the refugee problem in collaboration with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees. Brigadier Commander al-Gayli Ahmad al-Sharif, governor of the Eastern Province, also gave an address at the opening session. He gave a summary of the province's efforts to support the refugees and spoke about Sudanese traditions and behavior toward those who sought refuge in Sudanese territories.

The Minister of State for Refugee Affairs retired Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Rahman Sirr al-Khatim also addressed the session. He clarified the conference goals, which called for the Refugee Agency to develop in light of changes at both the regional and international levels. The agency's performance should be in line with the comprehensive national strategy. He pointed out that the agency should move along three axes. The agency should provide the largest amount of relief possible for refugees and for the regions that have been impacted upon by the presence of refugees, and the agency should raise the standard of living of those persons who assist refugees. He stated that many working papers will be submitted during the working sessions at the conference. The papers would include a review of the agency's role within the framework of the federal system. These papers would also include plans for both social projects for employees and the performance of the projects that have been impacted upon by the refugees.

In addition, the agency will review reports about those regions in Sudan that have been affected by the influx of refugees.

Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, deputy prime minister and deputy commander of the Revolution Command Council, had addressed the public meeting at the city of Ash-Shuwak, which he had reached yesterday. He had traveled to Ash-Shuwak in order to inaugurate the second Refugee Conference, which was held from 8 to 10 September.

Salih had ascertained that Sudan had succeeded in annulling the economic and political blockade to which it had been subjected. The blockade had been imposed on Sudan because it had announced its adherence to Islamic shari'a. Salih then went on to mention how factories and agricultural activities had fared well. He then described the phases of building the political system. He praised the inhabitants of Qadarif Province because they managed to elect their representatives in a civilized manner and in a short time, which fact proved their intelligence. These elections were carried out during the political and local conferences phase. Salih also praised the Eastern Province inhabitants, who contributed to supporting the popular defense camps with money and men. He also mentioned that more than 1,000 trainees had graduated from these camps and that most of them had taken part in field operations in southern Sudan. Salih donated 4 million pounds to support health, education, water, and electricity services in Ash-Shuwak region. At the beginning of this public meeting, Ahmad Ahmad 'Abdallah, president of Ash-Shuwak's rural council, addressed the public. He reviewed the National Salvation Revolution's achievements in all areas. 'Abdallah mentioned that Ash-Shuwak's rural council needed urgent support so that it could develop the region's services, as well as succeed in settling the nomadic Arabs.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Dubai Permits Foreign Companies in Free Zone

93AE0041A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
7 Oct 92 p 12

[Report from Dubayy: "Dubai Government Allows the Founding of Global Corporations in the Jabal 'Ali Free Zone"]

[Text] The Dubai Government is allowing the founding of global corporations in the Jabal 'Ali free zone for the first time since the zone was established in 1985. Shaykh Maktum bin-Rashid al-Maktum, UAE [United Arab Emirates] vice president and ruler of Dubai, issued a law that allows the founding of limited-liability juridical entities owned by individuals or institutions.

The law, which vests the Free Zone Authority with power to approve the founding and registration of enterprises, stipulates that "enterprises founded in the free zone do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Dubayy Municipality or of the Emirate's Ministry of Economy."

Informed economic sources in Dubayy said that "this new measure by the Dubai Government seeks to provide investors with further facilities and allows them to engage in

worldwide operations through the companies they establish in the free zone. Enterprises were previously prohibited by law from operating in the free zone unless they were licensed."

The sources, in interpreting the new law, said that the "free zone in Jabal 'Ali will not be a center for new companies founded with little capital that are not already engaged in commercial and industrial operations. Rather, it will be a center for generously capitalized global corporations that seek to extend their existing operations beyond their native borders in order to take advantage of the facilities, exemptions, and incentives offered by the free zones of the world. Such privileges include tax exemptions, freedom to repatriate profits, the absence of exchange controls, etc."

The sources expect the law, which went into effect on 26 September, to attract to Jabal 'Ali more global corporations that seek to enter Middle Eastern markets. They point out that the zone has so far attracted more than 420 corporations from 45 countries, accounting for aggregate investments of more than \$2.5 billion (\$700 million) [as published].

The following is the text of the law promulgated by Shaykh Maktum bin-Rashid al-Maktum in his capacity as ruler of Dubai Emirate:

Article 1: This law shall be known as Law No. 9 of 1992, concerning the founding of enterprises with juridical entities in the free zone of Jabal 'Ali.

Article 2: The following terms shall be defined as noted unless context indicates otherwise:

- The free zone is the free zone at the Port of Jabal 'Ali.
- The Authority is the Jabal 'Ali Free Zone Authority.
- The enterprise is an institution registered in the free zone in accordance with the provisions of this law.

Article 3: Enterprises endowed with limited-liability juridical entities and owned by a single individual or institution may be founded in the free zone.

All such enterprises shall have distinct legal standing and shall have independent financial status. The liability of their individual owners shall be limited to the capital invested in them.

Article 4: The Authority shall be empowered to approve the founding and registration of enterprises described in the previous article and to deal with all procedures and matters pertaining to it.

The Authority may promulgate rules and regulations for that purpose, including the levy of incorporation and registration fees, determining enterprise duration and conditions for deregistration and liquidation, and whatever else becomes necessary for control and oversight. The Authority may amend those rules from time to time as it sees fit.

Article 5: There shall appear next to the enterprise's appellation in all its documents, contracts, advertisements, invoices, correspondence, and publications that:

- It was founded under this law and that it is of limited liability.
- It is a free zone enterprise, or the acronym MMH

Should the provision of the two items in this Article be ignored, the owner of the enterprise shall be liable to the extent of his total assets for the obligations of the enterprise.

Article 6: The free zone operations of the enterprise shall not be subject to the authority of the Dubayy Municipality or of the Dubai Department of the Economy and shall not fall under the laws and regulations under which the Municipality or the Department of the Economy exercise their authority.

Article 7: Without prejudicing the provisions of the preceding Article, the enterprises shall be subject to all the laws in force in Dubai Emirate, including free zone laws and regulations and especially Articles 8, 9, 10, and 11 of Free Zone Law No.2 of 1986.

Article 8: The authority shall not be responsible to others for the operations or obligations of the enterprise.

Article 9: Provisions of other laws shall be null and void to the extent that they contravene the provisions of this law.

Article 10: This law shall come into force on the date of its issue and shall be published in the official gazette.

Construction Sector Experiences Jump in Growth

93AE0041B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
13 Oct 92 p 12

[Report from Dubayy: "Value of UAE (United Arab Emirates) Construction Market Expected To Rise to 20 Billion Dirhams by Year-End"]

[Text] A trade official here said that the UAE [United Arab Emirates] contracting sector has grown at a substantial rate during the year in both the private and public sector and that its figures for this year were far superior to those registered in 1991 in the aftermath of the Gulf war.

Ahmad Sayf Balhasa, president of the UAE Contractors Society, expects the construction and contracting sector to contribute between 18 and 20 billion dirhams to the state's Gross Domestic Product [GDP] by the end of the year, compared with an actual GDP share of 13 billion dirhams in 1991.

Balhasa, in press statements on the occasion of five major Dubayy expositions on "contracting and construction, life technologies, and air conditioning," said that UAE government expenditures are constantly on the rise and that the trend is expected to continue into the future. He added that the Abu Dhabi Government is currently undertaking energy and desalination projects at an estimated cost of more than 6 billion dirhams. The Dubai Government is likewise implementing similar projects that are estimated to cost 3 billion dirhams, in addition to al-Difa' Highway project, which will link Dubai with Abu Dhabi at a cost of more than 500 million dirhams.

He pointed out that UAE contractors achieved various successes during the years of prosperity and gained valuable experience that qualifies them to undertake major projects outside the Emirates. They are currently implementing several projects in the Gulf region, especially in Qatar and Kuwait, and are primarily focusing on the construction of roads, bridges, and airports.

Balhassa, who is also vice president of the Arab Contractors Association, said that the association currently seeks to expand the participation of Arab countries in its activities, especially those countries that are not members already. He pointed out that the Sultanate of Oman has recently joined the Arab Contractors Association and that efforts are being made to recruit Lebanon. He added that he intends to visit Lebanon before the end of the year to discuss avenues of mutual cooperation between the two countries in the field of contracting and construction.

He invited investors in the countries of the region to take part in the reconstruction of Lebanon and pointed out that many UAE contractors would take part in that reconstruction if the investors did.

Balhassa also said that there is a proposal under consideration to relocate the headquarters of the Association of Contractors in Muslim Countries from the Kingdom of Morocco to Jiddah in Saudi Arabia.

He added that it has also been decided to expand the membership of that association and that a number of countries have been asked to recruit their neighbors into joining.

David Domini, managing director of the World Convention and Exposition Company of Britain, which planned the five exhibits, said that a conference on contracting and construction will be organized at next year's exposition.

He said that the five exhibits were added in order to keep pace with the major construction push in countries of the region and to follow-up on successful exhibits on construction, water, and air conditioning. In addition to those three exhibits, two new exhibits on air conditioning, cleaning, and maintenance were added at the current exposition. Some 480 companies of 27 countries have exhibits at the exposition.

He pointed out that the water technologies exposition is one of the most important such expositions in the Arab nation, particularly because water is as important to the region as petroleum is to Europe. There is need for water treatment and consequently for bringing in modern technologies to make them available in the marketplace.

Domini expects the five current major expositions to net contracts worth more than \$250 million—a figure already achieved by the last exposition.

BANGLADESH

Editorial Criticizes Economic, Fiscal Management

BK0111135292 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH
OBSERVER in English 27 Oct 92 p 5

[Editorial: "The Economy and Strains"]

[Text] For some time past issues relating to the economy have been discussed in different forums. Some of these forums have been sponsored by official agencies, while others by multilateral institutions. Some have also been arranged by Academic Institutions. Personalities including Ministers, politicians, academicians, research specialists and executives of government departments and of multilateral agencies have made various assertions in such forums. Some of the exuberant elements even gave press interviews both within and outside the country and gave their views on the economy of Bangladesh and its future.

If one scans the assertions made and information provided by all these personalities in different forums one may identify a few specifics. One of them is related to the involvement of the public sector in the economy of Bangladesh and the ineffectiveness of public officials in managing productive units placed under public cooperations. The other is the (hypothetical) efficacy of private management vis-à-vis the initiation, operation and maintenance of industries and public utilities. The third is related to modalities of public finance and private entrepreneurship. The trend of presentation and analysis leads to assertions to the effect that the management of industries and services should be left to the private sector for better results.

In a seminar, organized by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies in the city, various aspects of the economy are being considered by professionals of distinction and policy makers in the country.

As pointed out in this column from time to time the management of the economy is of prime importance to the country. But the way the issues are presented and the recommendations made give any dispassionate observer a sense of dissatisfaction. None of the issues seems examined in depth, although theoretically they look innocuous. No one seems to have gone deep into the issues as to why the public sector was created, why its management became ineffective, why public money was misused, why sale proceeds of public sector products were not duly recorded in the book of accounts, why borrowed money was not utilized in a way that would enable an enterprise to earn enough to repay the loan with interest, and why sanctioned money was not made available to enterprises at appropriate time and in appropriate quantum.

Beyond those queries, one is dismayed when one finds that aid-givers insisted on use of expertise at a tremendously high cost (even though it could be avoided) siphoning off a large chunk of the money, which could otherwise be used for capital goods, maintenance of machinery and working capital for a given project. One is further puzzled, when local financial institutions fail to examine investment proposals in depth and extend support to otherwise non-viable projects. And why the executives of financial institutions fail to monitor the use of available funds and why they indulge in underhand deals. No one also seems to

bother about the mishmash of the machinery and equipment that have been imported without much of effective pre-shipment inspection, and also the idling of installed capacity in even enterprises.

Apparently, those are some of the issues that need to be reviewed before prescriptive assertions are made and policy decisions are adopted to follow such prescriptions. Any move without such a review is bound to face failure. One does not have to go far for such failure stories. As stated by a contributor in the seminar, noted above, over twenty five per cent of units of enterprises transferred from the public sector to the private sector have since been closed. Many of the private sector industrial and service sector units have not seen the light of day in spite of the funds they were provided with. And a few defaulters in private sector were reported to have obtained finance for largely nonviable projects and that to the detriment of interest of viable and running industries.

Keeping the above issues and aspects of management in view, the need is for specific guidelines which will make privatisation a dependable policy prescription rather than a repetition of the story of the failure of the public sector in industry.

The snags that have been noticed in the management of the private sector are more a result of imperfect supervision or monitoring by the financial institutions or authorities of the use of the funds distributed. Here again abuse and inefficiency—and perhaps also lack of management or industrial ethics—is the real villain—and certainly not privatisation as a principle in economic growth in step with the rest of the free world.

SRI LANKA

Minister Wijeratna Hailed for 'Plain Speaking'

93AS0112C Colombo THE ISLAND in English
28 Sep 92 p 8

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] At last it seems possible to make some sense of the speeches made by ministers on state occasions. The other day according to a report appearing in the Divaina, the Minister for Livestock Resources and Milk Production, Mr. Mahendra Wijeratna, while taking part in a tree-planting campaign uttered some basic truths—the stuff that really cheers the hearts of a long-tolerant and long-suffering public. Without mincing words he said that the tree-planting campaign is all a big bluff if that is the right word for 'boru vedak' the word he used to cast doubts on the kind of tree-planting that goes on.

In a few more days these plants will die, he went on to say, and that, he said, is because there is nobody to look after the plants once they are put down on the soil. The thing to do he said is to adopt a systematic plan for tree-planting like other countries, both India and Indonesia, have done. All the more creditable was the fact that such outspokenness was being displayed before the younger generation—no better audience to see through the 'hora-boru and wancha' of political speechifying.

No doubt his speech would have endeared him to his youthful audience, for these are brave words spoken at a

time when there are too many public speeches in the country and very little practical results to show for them. It is far better, Mr. Wijeratna said, to look after the trees that we have rather than go planting new ones. Just look, he said, drawing attention to what is going on, the trees that are being planted by the conservation people are being cut down without rhyme or reason by the Timber Corporation. In his own electorate, the Minister said, there are 8,000 acres of forest with no one to look after them while the villager who grows a tree or two in his homestead as a form of insurance is punished if he cuts them down.

These are, of course, the contradictions that we often see in government policies which do betray the fact that sometimes the right hand does not know that the left hand is up to. A similar honest admission was made by the Chief Minister of Central Province P.C. when addressing his officials recently over the great tomato fiasco and the suicide of tree farmers who failed to sell their harvest. Here again the tragedy was due to the left hand not knowing what the right was about or as the Chief Minister himself described it as the lack of a comprehensive plan—one that would encourage the farmer to grow tomatoes and buy them when they are ready.

A little more forthrightness on the part of ministers and a little more eagerness to place the blame in the right quarters could help us all to live in a better world with no tamashes to mislead us, no accelerated programs to make fast bucks on the Sisyphean attempt to wipe out poverty from the earth.

SAARC: Definition of Relationship With North Urged

93AS0112B Colombo *THE ISLAND* in English
27 Sep 92 p 12

[Text] Although the current round of visits to SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] countries undertaken by President Premadasa have been described as working visits and not full state visits he has been received with all the pomp and panoply befitting a Head of State. This is only natural considering that Mr. Premadasa is not only the President of Sri Lanka but also current Chairman of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation. No doubt these visits will greatly reinforce the friendship between Sri Lanka and the rest of South Asia while serving to remove whatever misunderstandings or irritants which have bedeviled relations earlier.

Coinciding with President Premadasa's visits Sri Lanka's High Commissioner in New Delhi, Mr. Neville Kanakaratne has announced the formation of the South Asian Preferential Trade Association through which it is sought to give an economic dimension to SAARC. However it will not be denied that much more progress will have to be made before anything tangible can emerge in the economic sphere as far as SAARC is concerned. As President Premadasa has pointed out poverty is a problem common to all countries but SAARC has not been able to do anything concrete to alleviate the poverty which binds

all these countries together. Rather we continue to be dictated to and exploited by the countries of the North.

In fact history shows that the problem of poverty has occupied the minds of South Asian leaders from the palmy days of the Bandung summit which preceded the establishment of the Non-aligned Movement. Poverty in the region has been caused not only by exploitation by colonial powers but also by the inability of the ruling elites as well as revolutionaries who inherited power from the colonialists to evolve suitable mechanisms of economic and social development in keeping with the national genius of the people of the region. The western economic model with its trickle-down theory of development as well as restrictive statist economic policies masquerading as socialism were responsible for the continuing backwardness of this region.

Now things are in the melting pot. India has abandoned her belief in statism while Sri Lanka is rapidly progressing on the road of a full-blooded market economy where privatisation is worshipped with a fervour bordering on the reverential. Private foreign investment is being courted with passionate zeal.

Hand in hand with these capitalist policies (capitalism no longer being a dirty word) are also programmes of poverty alleviation such as Janasaviya which are welfarist in character but are designed in the long-run to make the poorest of the poor partners of the market economy.

The challenge therefore is to make SAARC meaningful for the vast mass of the impoverished in South Asia. For this purpose new strategies of development rooted in the soil of the region have to be evolved in keeping with the culture and way of life of the people. The resources and raw materials available in the region have to be tapped and exploited for labour-intensive industries and enterprises which can generate employment. Since agriculture is the main occupation of the people, farming practices have to be modernised and agro-based industries established. Agriculture has to be salvaged from backward and regressive practices and expertise and marketing facilities offered to the farmers. The unequal relationship between town and village must be reversed and the flow to the towns stemmed by making village life meaningful for the people.

All this calls for political vision and will for what has to be done is nothing short of a stupendous act of social engineering. The Asiatic mode of production has to be changed in keeping with the demands of modernisation and commerce but not in a manner which will radically disrupt the traditional way of life. This is perhaps the biggest challenge of development economics in our times particularly in this region. Striking an optimistic note the President has said in Pakistan that it was intended through closer co-operation to exploit the potential of the one billion strong mass market in the region so that economic linkages can be evolved between countries in the region themselves. It will also lead to industrialisation and greater bargaining power within the global system, he has added. It will also call for a new re-definition of the relationship between SAARC countries and the rest of the world particularly the countries of the North.

Bandaranaike: Parliament Should Defer to Courts

93AS0112A Colombo *THE ISLAND* in English
26 Sep 92 p 6

[Text] The statement issued by Leader of the Opposition Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike and carried by us yesterday on the laws of parliamentary privilege merit serious attention since it raises some fundamental issues which touch on the freedom of the press and the freedom of expression. The gravamen of Mrs. Bandaranaike's contention is that parliamentary privilege must be invoked only in the case of the day-to-day business of Parliament whereas today it was being invoked even with regard to matters which should normally be dealt with by the courts of law. The immediate provocation for Mrs. Bandaranaike's statement is the refusal of the Editor of 'RAVAYA' Mr. Victor Ivan to appear before the Committee on Privilege over a breach of privilege raised by Mr. K.N. Choksy PC (President's Council) and MP [member of Parliament] against the newspaper.

The position adopted by Mr. Victor Ivan is not merely that the matter should not be dealt with by the Committee since it is a matter for the courts but also that the Committee preponderantly consists of Members of Parliament who themselves have raised similar breaches of privilege against the 'RAVAYA.' The question naturally arises whether with the greatest respect to those members they would be able to calmly and dispassionately judge the rights and wrongs of the case against Mr. Ivan in these circumstances.

Mrs. Bandaranaike has referred to the judgement of the Supreme Court in the case of the late Mr. S. Nadesan QC that Parliament should not exercise its powers in regard to offences other than those related to its day-to-day activities and should refer those offences to the ordinary courts of law. The experience has been that those courts have always by nature as it were adopted a very objective attitude towards matters normally considered by Parliament to be breaches of privilege but which can well be justified as valid criticism in a democratic context.

In the case of Mr. Nadesan who was accused of a breach of privilege for criticising the conduct of Parliament in the case of breach of privilege raised against the then Editor of the 'OBSERVER' Mr. Harold Pieris and Associate Editor Philip Coorey, the Supreme Court found him not guilty. In the case against the then Editor of the 'ATHTHA' the late B.A. Siriwardena accused of a breach of privilege against the then Deputy Minister of Higher Education Mr. A.M.R.B. Attanayake, the Supreme Court only fined the Editor Rs. 100. It will be clear, therefore, that the courts have always come down heavily on the part of the freedom of expression whereas Parliament has always been (perhaps naturally) jealously protective of its rights.

As Mrs. Bandaranaike also points out, the present privileges law was hurriedly rushed through two days before Mr. J.R. Jayewardene assumed the office of President supplanting the earlier law framed by an all-party Select Committee of both the then House of Representatives and the Senate which did not empower Parliament to fine or imprison an accused. That power was vested in the courts.

The very next day the two 'OBSERVER' Editors were hauled up before the bar of the House and interrogated and quizzed mercilessly on the charge of defaming Minister of

Foreign Affairs A.C.S. Hameed through a mix-up of captions. A case can well be made therefore for going back to the original law for while Parliament certainly has the right to defend itself from calumny, parliamentarians who are themselves involved in the process might not be the best judges.

Commentary Views Traditional Care of Elders

93AS0112D Colombo *THE ISLAND* in English
28 Sep 92 p 10

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] This is Elders' Week which begins with 1 October, the day set apart by the United Nations to draw attention to the need to care for the elderly. Here in the East caring for the elderly is something we have imbibed with our mothers' milk. This tradition has stood up well to the batterings it continues to receive from the social changes arising under modern conditions of living and where the rat race in particular is pushing the aged at best into homes and at worst to the periphery of society.

This phenomenon the U.N. noted is due to our own doing and is a paradox of our time. We have improved our health and hygiene and ensured a longer life for all while at the same time trying to prevent more of us being born with the result now we have more old people on our hands and less youths. No doubt, following the tenets of economic philosophy (the Bible of our day) too closely has its own problems. In that process it has created an ugly word-gerontology defined as the scientific study of old age and the process of ageing. But all such special studies do not bring us any closer to the solution of the problems of old people which are that of their need not only for physical care but emotional warmth.

This was ensured once by the joint-family system where the mahagedera met the needs of social and medical insurance as well as the urge to be 'rooted in a dear perpetual place.' But all that is slowly giving way as the current Tele-drama Doo Daruwo shows us casting a powerful spell on the viewers. What is really the answer to the growing problem of elders we are confronted with today? Even in the countries where this problem is acute like the industrial societies, the Asian presence has helped them to learn how to deal with this situation. The West today admires the pride of place the East gives to family life and how these emotional ties generate care and concern for the old and weak. In Australia, for instance, some states provide special 'granny flats,' attached to the homes of their children.

So that Asians can continue their practice of looking after their elders. Here in Lanka the many Homes for the Elders continue to give to the elderly, particularly those who are bereft of all family ties, the homely environment needed. The organisation known as HelpAge, however, has gone a step further. It is trying to inspire the younger generation (by drawing the schools into this program) to be more helpful and attentive to the helpless like the aged.

There was a tradition once of making donations to monasteries to set up homes for the aged where even the donor may choose to retire to. This worthy tradition may be revived. Meanwhile HelpAge has drawn up a scheme where you can remember these Homes in your legacies. Those who wish to do so may ask for 'Your Guide to Making a Will' from HelpAge which is now based at 102, Pemananda Mawatha, Raththanapitiya, Boralessgamuwa.

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